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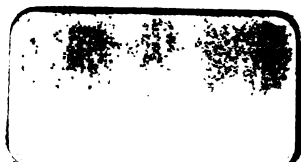


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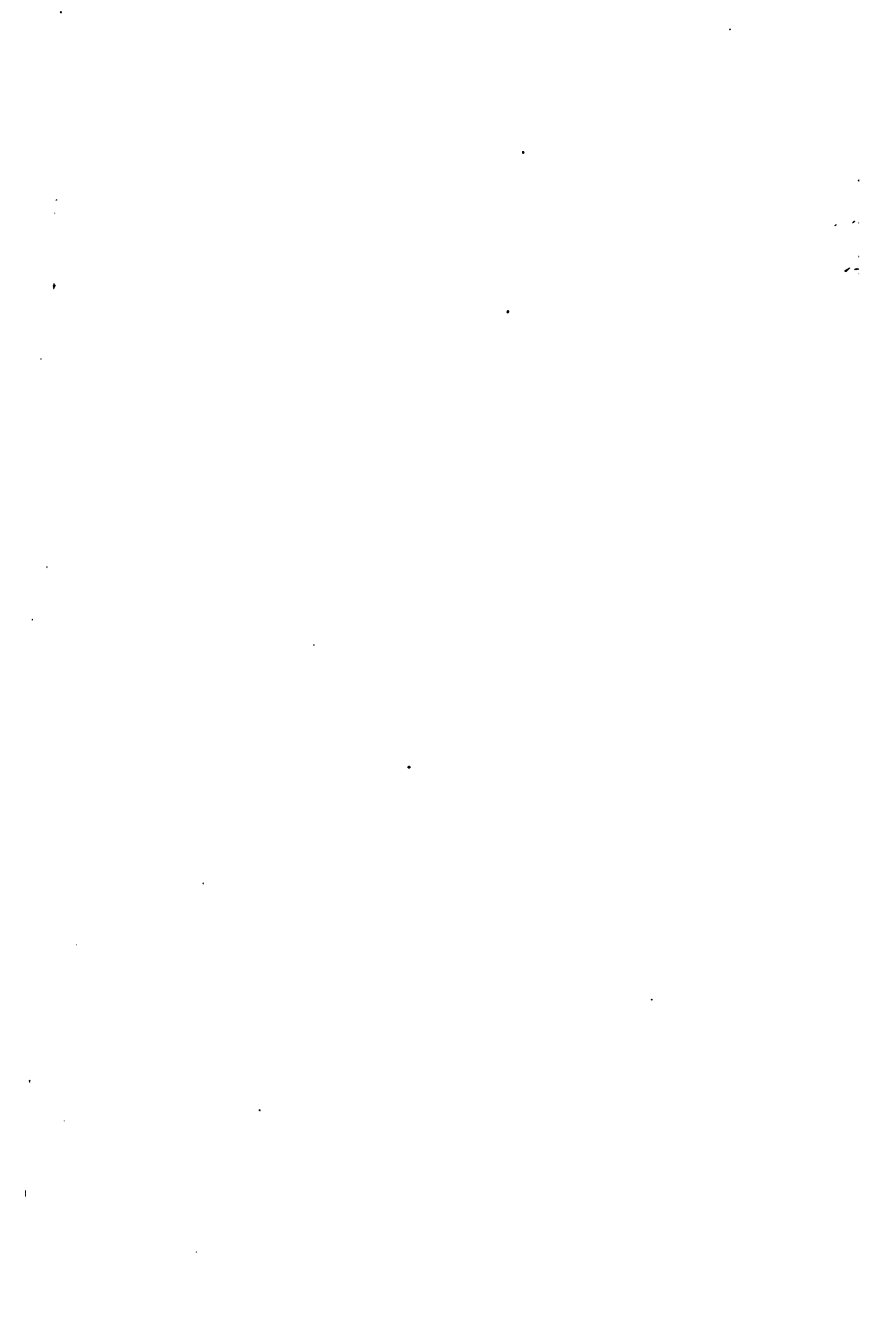
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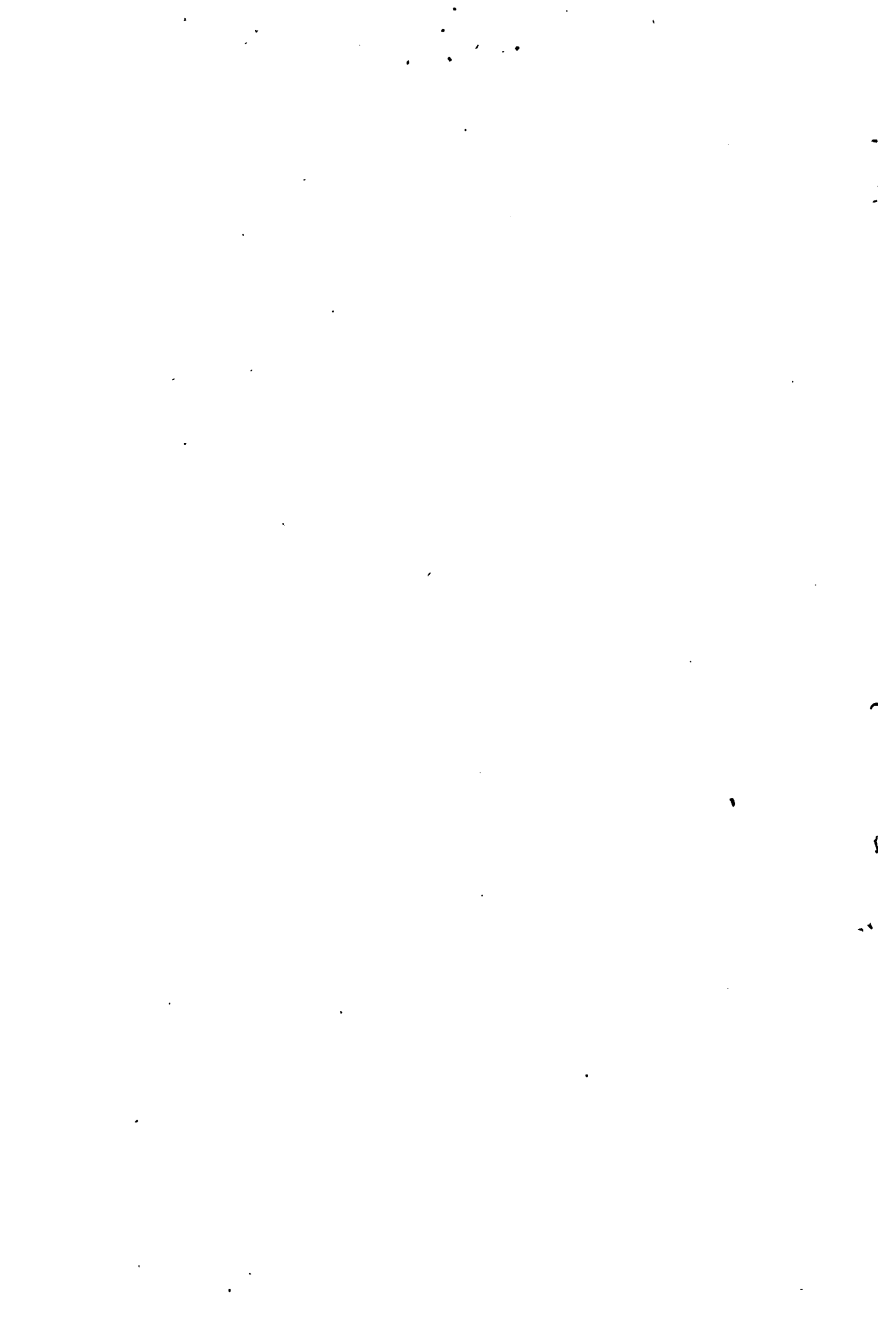
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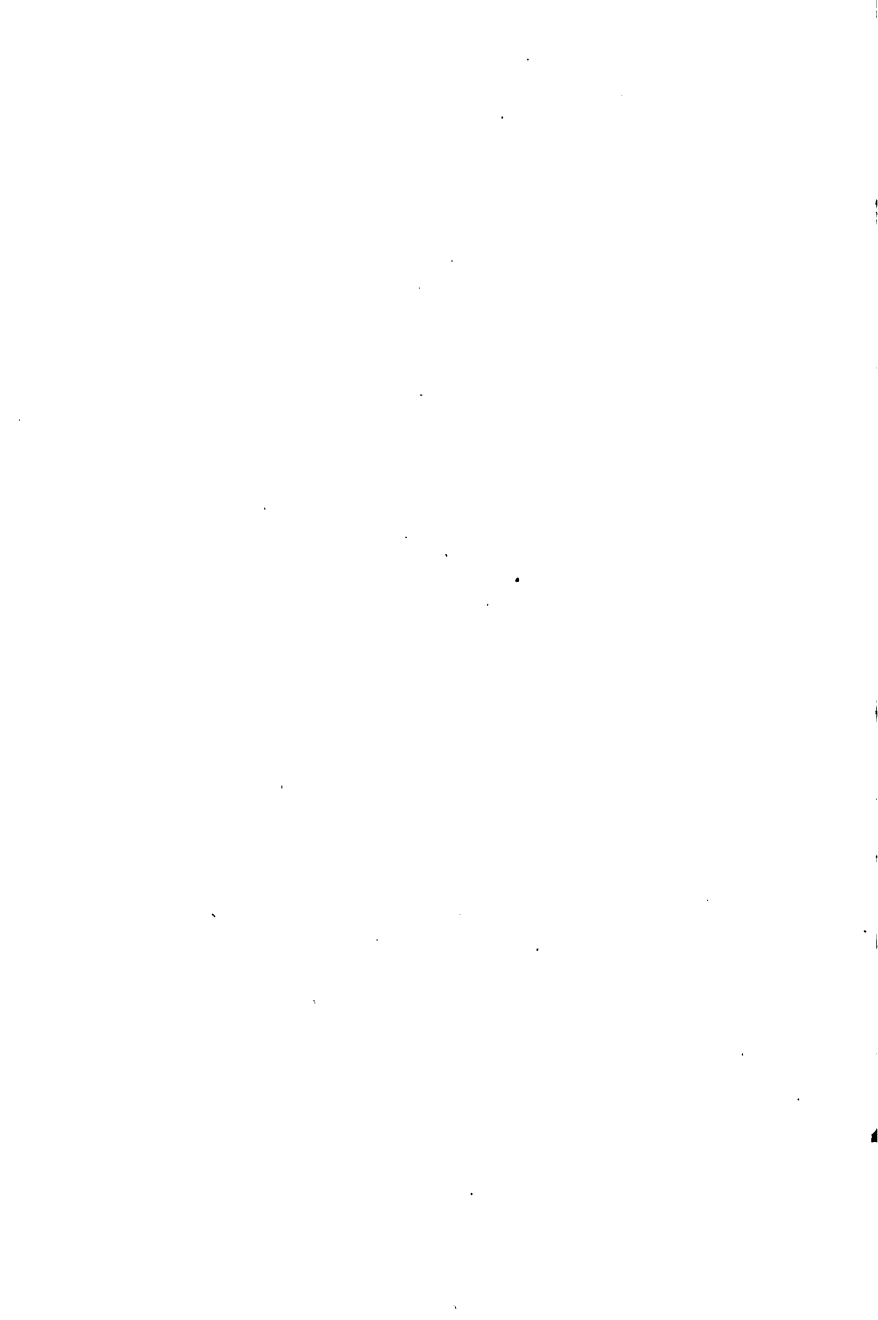
BALLYNASTRAGH, GOREY,

CO. WEXFORD,

21st October, 1891.

THE contents of the following pages first saw the light a year ago in the columns of *United Ireland*. Several of my friends have considered them worthy of reproduction in book form. This reason partly explains their reappearance ; but it is also explained by my desire for a remembrance—even in the shape of so imperfect a record—of many friendships made, and of many novel experiences in the course of some three years of travel through the Greater Ireland beyond the seas. This book does not pretend to be an exhaustive treatment of its subject. It is but a collection of hasty sketches by the way side. Such as it is I dedicate it to those generous and kindly sympathisers with my country and her cause abroad, who loving her helped me to work for her.

THOS. H. GRATTAN ESMONDE.

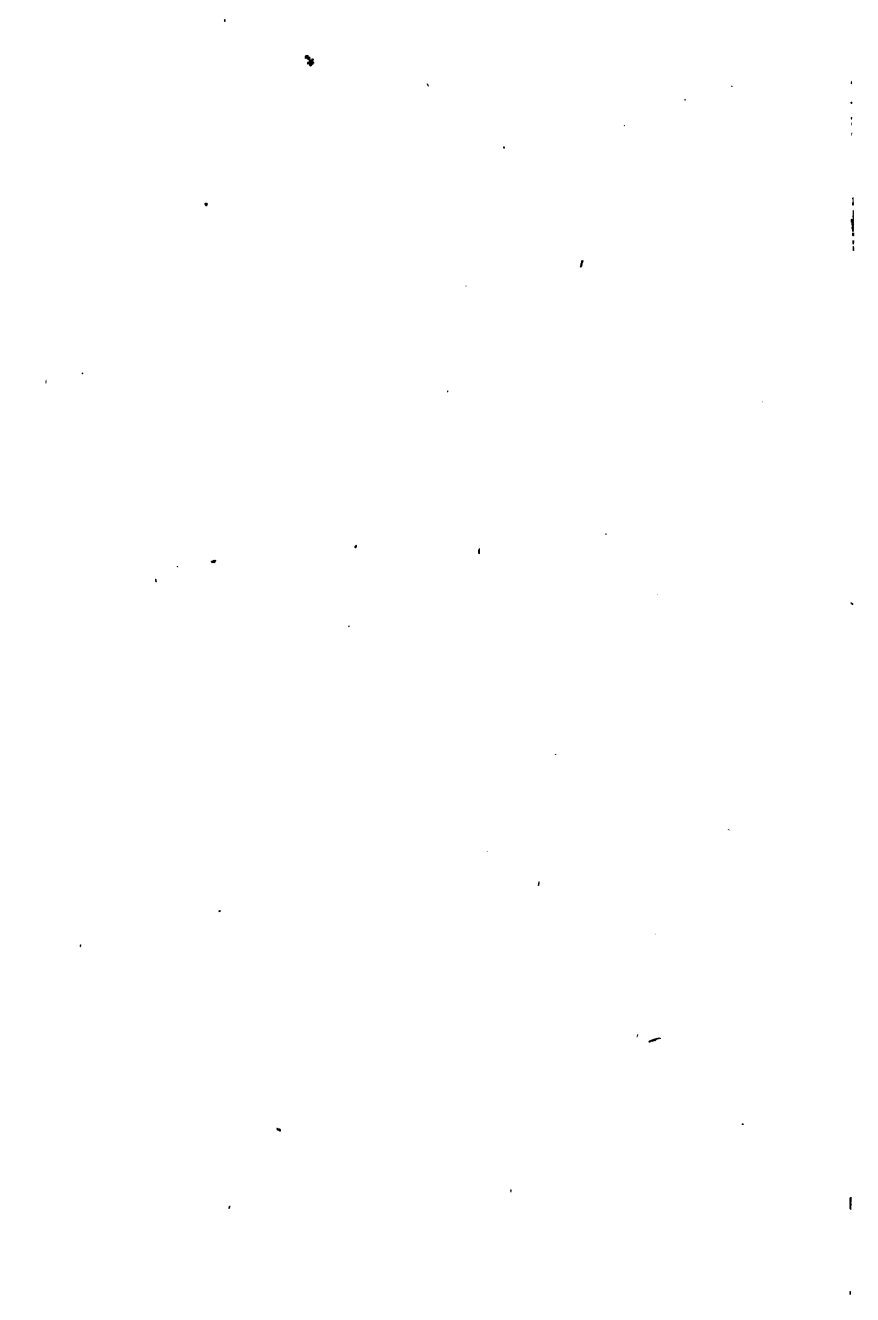


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# ROUND THE WORLD

WITH THE

## IRISH DELEGATES.



### CHAPTER I.

#### OUR FIRST STAGE.

GENTLE READER,

Will you come with me on a trip round the globe? I'll do my best to amuse you. I'll make the way as short and as easy as I can. As we journey along together we may learn some things we don't already know, some things that may give us cause to stay and ponder over the many things we have yet to discover anent this pleasant world of ours, and concerning that strange, semi-mythical creature whom we call our fellow-man. Come along, anyhow! And when I begin to bore you, when you grow weary of my platitudes and of my yarns, leave me! Get off the coach! I'll pick a soft place for you: and we shall part company none the worse friends. Is it a bargain? Well then: all aboard! We're off! We're off for that dread and eerie land where the lion growls, and the river-horse splashes; where the cruel vulture wheels aloft in the palpitating air; and where the fleet spring-bok and fleeter ostrich scud on the wings of the wind over the grassy veldt and parched karoo. We're off to that dark, romantic continent, whose

mystic pyramids look serenely down upon the desert sands, with the awful calm befitting witnesses of the doings and undoings of mankind for thousands upon thousands of years : to that weird region, which, age after age, has given silent birth to movements of men and of men's minds, that have rocked the universe to its foundations, and concerning which to-day, notwithstanding the exploits of our Livingstones, our Stanleys, our Serpa Pintos, we know comparatively nothing. Yes, we are off to Africa.

But we are not going there as many have gone before us, and as many more will go, to colonise, to dig for gold, to barter ivory black or white. We are going as the advocates of a cause, as the spokesmen of a people, as the evangelists of the old and sacred doctrine of Irish liberty. What wonder, then, if we walk the deck of the stately ship, that bears us and our fortunes, with something of the feeling of young enthusiasm, of buoyant courage, and of hopeful expectation, which must have buoyed the heart of the Crusader in days of yore, as he set out from his western home to serve a cause no holier and no higher than ours. So we pace the deck, musing over the myriad thoughts that come to us—some fond, some sad, some brightly shining. The sun goes down in the West—rather redly, perhaps—the air grows chilly. We smoke our last pipe—You smoke, gentle reader masculine? “Of course!”—We go below, and we turn in.

We turn in ; but not for long. We are soon turned out. Turned out? Ay! Evicted! Dispossessed! Ejected with every accompaniment of

barbarity. We wake up suddenly upon the cabin floor, amid a moving and unsympathetic mass of boots and shirts and hats, and Gladstone bags, and books ; while all the air is rent with growls, and groans, and sighs, and shrieks for "Steward!" and the crash of falling crockery, and blasphemy in many a key. The good ship "Argo" seems to be suddenly possessed of a devil or else seized with a fit, for she shudders and quivers and jumps and rolls as no really proper ship ought to do. While above and around and below there's a rush and a swish and a swirl of waters, and Balfour the Brave must have supplied every Triton in old Neptune's pay with the latest edition of his battering-ram, from the way they are pounding her sides. What's the matter! As we gather ourselves up grumpily from amongst the bits of our basin and drop with a prayer into our bunk again, we realise that we have left the Channel and its comparative shelter, and are battling in the teeth of a wintry sou'-wester—and a prize sou'-wester, too. Not much sleep that night.

Next morning we are in "The Bay." That awful Bay! The happy hunting-ground of unemployed cyclones! Now we understand why the old sea-song winds up its dismal chorus with such a series of preternatural O's. No one can think of the Bay of Biscay without a gruesome recollection of the groans it exacts from its visitors. All that day, and indeed for the greater part of the next, we join more or less melodiously, and very much against our better inclination, in the lugubrious refrain. But there's an end to all things, and, thank Heaven, there is to sea-sickness. We get on our sea-legs somehow—all the

speedier, perhaps, that the ship's doctor is too sick to look after us—and on the afternoon of the third day we are equal to creeping on deck, from whence, yellow-faced and unshorn, we gaze with longing eyes upon the rocky and uninviting shores of Portugal. We have been running down them for some hours now, and rocky and uninviting as they appear, their sight revives our drooping spirits. So much so, that when the gong summons us to dinner at 7 p.m., we hear with just a flutter of pleasurable excitement that midnight will find us in the Tagus. At this meal for the first time we see something of our fellow-passengers. We have them of all sorts—merchants, tourists, farmers, engineers. Some going out in quest of health, some to make their fortunes, and some to attend to fortunes already made. We have fair ladies, too, and foreigners of distinction, as well as certain gentlemen whose sable garb and ascetic features proclaim them evangelists like us, though of a quality perhaps different to ours. Among the distinguished foreigners is no less a personage than the Comte de Paris. A most mildly-mannered man. A revolutionist of the rose-water type. He goes to Lisbon to Christmas with his son-in-law, the King of Portugal. To look at him one would not think that he could ever be a danger to anything, much less to Republican institutions in France. But still, because of his silly admirers there, who must make him a pretext for losing their tempers, the French Government have been compelled to compel the poor gentleman to get sea-sick, and horribly sea-sick, too, whenever he wishes to visit his daughter in Portugal, by

warning him off French soil. By midnight we are at the mouth of the Tagus, and in still water. Hail blessed change! Slowly we steam up the river, stemming the deep current which rushes past us with tremendous velocity, and waking the echoes with our fog-horn. But neither pilot boat nor revenue cutter comes near us. Portuguese officialism is in bed. Suddenly we round a bend of the river, and Lisbon lies before us. What an enchanting spectacle! It recalls to us that of which we have read in fairy tales. The river bank is illuminated by myriads of twinkling lights rising tier above tier, now in straight and now in curved lines, cutting each other here and blending there, setting up in gala array the fantastic outline of the city against the dark background of the night, while below the inky waters catch up the reflection, broken only here and there by the dim outline of some stationary ship, like a gigantic bird of the night brooding peacefully with folded wings. No sound breaks the silence that hangs over everything like a pall. Not a ripple breaks the water under those illuminated heights. There is no sign of life or movement anywhere. We blow our syren viciously. The air trembles. The echoes swing around and around. They are caught up and answered behind us, before us, they hover in the black dome above us. But Lisbon gives no sign. No one stirs. Finally, in desperation, we fire off a gun. In response to our warlike challenge, a row-boat, manned by a couple of sleepy marines, turns up from goodness knows where. It yells at us something in the vernacular, which, being interpreted, would read—"What the devil do

you want?" We yell back that the Comte de Paris wants to go ashore; whereupon the boat grumbles and vanishes. That ends the episode. Nobody comes for the descendant of St. Louis that night. Next morning at cock-crow he, with all his suite, takes his *départure* in a coal-barge.

Lisbon is a charming old place, and beautifully situated. It spreads all over a number of steep little hills that pen in the broad and rapid Tagus. It is full of quaint and narrow streets. In one of them we meet a number of old friends in the shape of Cork butter firkins. It has several interesting churches hoary and grey with age, one very handsome thoroughfare called "The Golden Street," and quite a number of pretty squares. Of these one is particularly well worth visiting. It has a mosaic pavement, so cleverly designed that when you cross it in one direction you imagine yourself walking along the top of a ridge; and when you retrace your steps you fancy you walk in a hollow, whereas the whole is as flat as a billiard-table. But we have no time to dally in Lisbon. We must away. Two days later we sight Madeira, a most picturesque island, whose rugged mountains, resembling somewhat the "Rockies," in Colorado, show clearly against the cloudless sky, while at their base the blue Atlantic rages and frets and chafes unceasingly. We anchor off Funchal, which nestles luxuriously at the bottom of a beautiful bay, closed to the southward by a curiously-shaped rock, not unlike the old Greek fortress at Ischia, in the bay of Naples. The ship has scarce lost way before we are surrounded by a flotilla of boats, manned by dark-faced,

vivacious creatures. Some of them offer us, with a perfect Babel of sound and a most frantic display of gesticulation, all sorts of odds and ends, from figs to photographs, and at all sorts of prices. Others, equally eloquent and quite as gymnastic, implore us to have nothing to do with these gentry—robbers they term them—but to throw all our spare cash into the sea. This we do by-and-by in the most reckless fashion. But to explain. Our friends are divers by nature, or by profession, and indeed it makes but little difference; they do a thriving business. This is their method of operation. They draw up their boats together at some little distance from the ship. In each boat there are two boys—a big boy clothed in a species of night-shirt, and a small boy without a night-shirt. The one sits by the oars of the skiff, the other stands up in the stern-sheets. Twenty or thirty throats clamour with the ample volume of healthy lungs for pennies. Somebody flings a handful overboard. At once there is a simultaneous splash and a general boiling and bubbling of the water all along the line. The small boys have all disappeared. If you want to find them you must look right downwards, and there, below the bottom of the ship, you will see them through the crystalline water struggling with each other like so many mermen for the coins you have thrown into the sea. But we're in luck. The captain says we may go ashore, and away we go, helter-skelter down the ship's side and into the first of the rickety boats we can seize. Dealers and divers all join in the race to the shore. In five minutes we are landed on the beach,



at the base of the weather-beaten signal tower, and in another two we are in the streets of Funchal. What a quaint, old-fashioned place it is! Little bits of houses, separated by little narrow streets, roofed with rough red tiles, gorgeous all about with lovely flowers and shrubs, and smothered in luxuriant creepers. Here the easy-going citizens are born and live their lives, and are gathered to their fathers without the shadow of a shade of concern for what goes on in the great world outside. A sleepy, dreamy air hangs over all, and about the liveliest sight the thoroughfares present is that of the diminutive native carriages with leather curtains, mounted on wooden runners instead of wheels, and drawn noiselessly over the stony pavements by patient looking, microscopic oxen, adorned with crimson tassels and tinkling bells. Our time is short, so we rush to the fruit market, the centre of Funchal's commercial activity, where we eat fruit till we are nearly sick, and buy more than we can carry away for next to nothing. The syren sounds, 'tis the second call; so we return on board. The anchor is drawn up. We throw our last coin to the divers, and we leave Funchal and its lovely roadstead bathed in all the glories of the eventide. Next morning at day break we are off the Canaries. We pass close under the far-famed Peak of Teneriffe, and lovely, indeed, it looks, like a bit cut out of the Sierra Madre, with a sprinkling of snow on its shapely head, standing there in stately solitude, glowing in the morning sunlight, with ever-varying rainbow tints, while the eternal ocean bathes its feet below.

Another day finds us in the tropics. The fickle

Atlantic is as still as a mill-pond. Not even a ripple disturbs its surface. There is not a cloud in the sky. The sun beats down on the wide awnings, that cover us fore and aft, and we begin to feel what the tropics can do when they make up their mind to be tropical. Fortunately, we have the benefit of the trade winds, which circulate freely through our canvas galleries, and we reckon but little of the heat. We are to sight no land now till our destination is reached; so we settle down to enjoy the sea. And we do enjoy the sea. For the sea can be enjoyed when it behaves itself quite as much as it can be loathed when it misbehaves, and that is saying a great deal. What a rest is not a voyage in fine weather! No telegrams! No newspapers! No letters to answer! No exasperating correspondents to satisfy! No calls to make! No tiresome engagements to keep! No bores to entertain! No business! No bills! Nothing to do but what one chooses to do, and when and how one chooses. One may eat, drink, sleep, read, loaf, just as one likes, and when one likes, and as much or as little as one likes. Yes! 'Tis a glorious time—for a time. Our time flies fast enough. We have a jolly lot of fellow-passengers aboard. Everybody from the captain down is pleasant and cheery—ready to amuse and to be amused. We have an excellent ship's band, which every other night discourses sweet music on the quarter deck, as we lounge around or loll in easy deck-chairs, smoke endless cigars, and revel in all the luxury of absolute and unmitigated idleness. While, ever and anon, as we sit silent there, spell-bound by the magic influence

melody alone can wield, some old, familiar strain falls softly upon our ear, and with moistened eye, we are carried back in spirit to those scenes and souls we have left behind us far, far away; while deep down in our hearts that chord vibrates and moves our being as an earthquake does the mountain-tops—that chord which is never touched nor tuned save when space illimitable lies betwixt us and home. Again some nights, to vary the monotony, we have a performance of Christy Minstrels. A marvellous performance, provocative of excruciating mirth, in which certain heroic souls blacken their faces with a most tenacious black, rig themselves out in most startling garb, twang asthmatic banjos, sing idiotic songs, crack blood-curdling jokes, and make fools of themselves wholesale for the edification and exhilaration of their fellow-man. Then we have concerts—everyone joins in them—in which voices and ears are not essentials as a qualification for service, nor is too bigoted a devotion to either music or symphony required; and magic-lantern shows—time-honoured wastes of time—at which each portion of the earth is visited, in somewhat chaotic sequence possibly, but still, with explanations and expoundings and explorations worthy of the name and fame and strict varacity of the tourist guides of the nineteenth century; and at which art, literature, history, politics, botany, chemistry, geology, zoology, conchology, medicine, and the Lord knows what besides, are thrown in promiscuous with a lavish hand, and pass before our bewildered vision as we sit there dumb-founded, stupified, enjoying a surfeit of intellectual

hotch-potch. Some nights, when we feel jaded after a succession of these exciting revels, we elect to do nothing, and wander about the deck and watch the phosphorescent gleamings of the water, as the never-tiring screw forces the great ship through the yielding waves; or we give ourselves over to the study of the starry spheres, brush up our astronomy, play at casting horoscopes, or point out for the hundredth time to any wretched creature we can button-hole, and who is too polite to tell us that he knows all about it already, that most disappointing and deformed constellation—the Southern Cross. So much for the night. During the day we play at quoits or at deck billiards; we even go so far as to hold athletic sports. These are rough and ready, it may be, but they are decidedly athletic. Invariably on these occasions the most popular events on the card are the egg race and the obstacle race. Have you ever seen a cat laugh? I never have; but a cat, I'll swear, couldn't help laughing, were he to see a score or so of sedate and self-respecting citizens, struggling along, with their faces set in grim determination, and their eyes all but starting from their sockets, each man holding an egg—not always newly laid—in a gigantic ladle at arm's-length before him, which he endeavours to keep steady, with most unsteady contortions, highly suggestive of an advanced stage of intoxication, until he passes a certain point before anybody else, at which point the egg, at all events, does not always happen to arrive. A cat, I say, should laugh were he to witness an assemblage made up of prosperous merchants, staid fathers of families, brave sailors, gallant soldiers, and sapient

legislators, shuffling and scrambling, and squeezing and crushing, and crawling through empty sacks, over barricades of deck-chairs, under greasy tarpaulins, through empty casks, over ladders, through life-buoys, with no other object than to reap the glory of not being left behind. We go farther, even, than this. We are ambitious, like Cæsar. We play cricket matches on deck. And such cricket! Our Australian friends would be simply nowhere compared to us. We play matches against the officers of the ship, and we beat them hollow. An unprecedented performance this, snatching victory from these sea-dogs upon their own element. We play the second saloon passengers, and we beat them. We play the steerage passengers, and we beat them. We play the world, and we beat the world. Finally, we get played out. There is nobody left to beat. Then we see all the sights of the sea. Sharks and whales, and porpoises and flying fishes; strange birds, to which the ocean rovers have given stranger names. Sun-rises and sunsets, which, for sheer loveliness, baffle description; thunderstorms, waterspouts, all those curious sights, in short, of which we read as coming within the ken of those who go down to the sea in ships. In our messmates, too, there are mines of wealth we eagerly explore. Some are chatty, some are taciturn; some are travelled men who have seen everything worth seeing, and with whom our only difficulty is to induce them to eke out, for our information and entertainment, their varied store of incidents of travel by sea and land. Others have never yet been anywhere. Of these several are

sources of infinite amusement, from the *naïve* way in which they manifest their surprise at the novel things they see day by day, and in which they show their appreciation of the difference between a something seen and the same thing learned from books. We have, likewise, jesters and storytellers amongst us, to whom we give blank cheques upon the bank of our gullibility and upon the treasury of our admiration of bad jokes. For we are not critical. We readily allow unlimited credit to whosoever is anxious to make us gay. As a last resource we form circles, even within the little circle of our little world. We cement eternal friendships off-hand, and as easily convert them into undying vendettas, as fate or fickleness impel us. We do all those things, in fine, which men will do when thrown together upon the ocean-wave. And so the hours and days fly by. The throbbing engines urge us on. Nearer and nearer comes the moment of our parting. We scarcely realise what parting means, until at length we gather round the hospitable board in the comfortable state-room to eat our last meal together. Then a feeling, if but a transient one, of something akin to sadness comes over us, and, one and all, we vow that we have spent less pleasant times by far, than the three weeks just closing in, and, one and all, we pledge ourselves in bumpers of Cape wine to keep green the kindly recollection of this our voyage to "Afric's Southern wilds."

The morrow's sun is barely peeping above the horizon, shooting his flaming arrows high up into the heavens, when we all rush on deck. The magic words have been passed round—"Land's in sight."

We join the little excited crowd by the bulwarks. Some have glasses—others have not. Some can't see with them—others can see double without them. "Where is it?" we ask. "Here it is," answers one. "No! it's there," shouts another. "I tell you that's a cloud," rejoins the former. "Hooray for Table Mountain," roars a cheery old ostrich farmer, waving a huge felt hat. We all sing "Hooray." We are abreast of Table Bay.

At first we can distinguish little tangible. A cloud bank, a dim mass of fleecy vapour, sweeps round in wide curve ahead of us. Presently, as we steam nearer, there is a movement of the fog, as if the breath of some ocean-sprite were moving it away. The sun rises higher, and his yellow rays fall obliquely upon the waves of mist, tinging their crests with a golden halo. And now darker and more substantial shadows show behind. A few more minutes and we descry mountain peaks floating in the milk sea. Now they push further and further out of it. Now the waves surge up and swallow them again. The land breeze stiffens. The sun mounts higher. Once more the jagged pinnacles struggle into sight. The fog gives way. It quivers and sways. Suddenly, like the fleeing squadrons of a vanquished host, it falls asunder. The light winds seize it, rend it, scatter it; and as its torn and flying wreaths vanish in shreds in the blue ether, the great, grand, massive, storm-scarred outline of Table Mountain bursts upon our delighted eyes. There it stands, frowning and darksome, towering above its brother mountains, rough and bold and huge. The embodiment of strength eternal, of time-defying haughtiness, as if

moulded by the blows of Cyclops' hammers into an imperishable monument to Africa's unconquerable wildness. Table Mountain is unique. It gives a character to the region in which it stands, and to the city lying under its very shadow, for which there is no parrallel upon the face of the globe. Curving slightly it bounds a sloping plain, which drops from the feet of its perpendicular cliffs down to the sea. Upon this slope Cape Town is built, and a more nobly picturesque situation is owned by no other city in the world. The black walls of Table Mountain tower some three or four thousand feet sheer to the sky. Its summit is a vast and all but inaccessible plateau—hence its name. To see it, as we saw it, clear and bare on the bright morning of our arrival, is given to few. Usually it is shrouded in a piled-up canopy of woolly, creamy vapour, called by the Cape Town folk "The Tablecloth," which spreads along its summit, and hangs over it in misty festoons, with an effect so weird and so characteristically singular, that to paint its description in plain prose is impossible. As we draw closer and closer to the port we lose ourselves in a maze of speculation upon the varied scenes those mute grey cliffs have witnessed, since the days when first the Bushmen nestled among their caves and crannies; as the daring sailors of Portugal first weathered the dreaded and ill-omened "Cape of Storms;" as the Dutchman followed, and wrested their territory from the fierce aboriginal tribes; and as the Englishman followed him and tore from him, as he had already torn from its primæval owners, the rich historic realm of Southern Africa.



## CHAPTER II.

## ARRIVAL IN CAPE TOWN.

AGAIN we stand upon *terra firma*. We have bidden good-bye to our genial captain and to his courteous subordinates ; we have done the same by the cheery company with whom we have lived and laughed for the past three weeks. We stand upon the wharf at Cape Town. Over us towers the grey, gigantic mass of Table Mountain, with its snowy cloth of billowy cloud. On all sides a busy, loud-voiced throng of Asiatic and African coolies and porters rush and push and scramble and squabble, with bales of merchandise upon their backs or baggage in their arms, while immediately around us are gathered a group of bronze-faced, earnest-looking men, clad in raiment somewhat strange to the Old World eye, but which the torrid heats of these southern regions require imperatively for ease and comfort. Not all the sun and wind of Africa, however, can obliterate in the wearers that stamp of racial characteristic which proclaims their blood the same as ours. They are our kinsmen. They are the representatives, the leaders of the Cape Town Irishmen. And a stalwart band they are. A credit to any country—a big word—and a credit to the old Motherland—a bigger one. You have types among them of every class and walk of life—law makers and law dispensers, tradesmen, merchants,

and professional men. Specimens they are—and good ones—of what Irishmen can do when they get a chance; of how they prosper, as things go, in every country save their own; and of how they yet shall prosper in their own land by-and-by. They crowd around us, each one eager to catch a glimpse of us; to see what manner of men are these men who have come all the way from Erin of the Streams to the capital of the Africanders as the spokesmen of Irish nationality. They grasp us warmly by the hand. They welcome us as only Irishmen can welcome Irishmen. They ply us with questions, searching and innumerable, as to how it fares with the folk at home. But they remember we must not stay, broiling there in the sun. We are not seasoned to the heat, nor proof against the treacherous darts of the African Sun-god. So away we go—in hansoms, save the mark!—through the broad, glistening, white streets, lined on either hand with spacious stores and public buildings; past the Parliament House, which rises gracefully over the city—a model of architectural beauty; past the Governor's residence—he is another Irishman, by the way, and, if fame speaks truly, a Home Ruler—and we admire his quarters, or what we can see of them, as they peep out here and there from amidst a jungle of tropical greenery, and seem to invite to perpetual repose in their shady creeper-covered verandas. Right through the city we drive, and at last, rising a little above it, we find ourselves under the deliciously cool colonnades of that most perfect hostelry—the International. Here we are absolutely at home, and we make ourselves

at home. We spend the afternoon meandering about the gardens, talking with our new-found friends, telling of our travels, answering their inquiries, and laying plans under their guidance and instruction for our African campaign. Or we climb the balconies of the International, whence, under the grateful shade of the overhanging roof, we look out upon the scene of beauty that unfolds itself before us. Below us lies Cape Town, showing snowy white against the browns and reds and greens that hem it in, while beyond stretches the broad expanse of Table Bay, framed in a setting of jagged mountains, save where to the south-east it opens to the limitless Southern Sea. Cape Town has its sights and show-places. We are in duty bound to visit them.

There is Wynneberg—portentous name! bound up in old historic tradition, with scenes of ravage and of massacre, of wild atrocity and of wilder revenge. Wynneberg is to-day the fashionable resort of the Cape Town aristocracy, and of those who seek change of air upon its velvet sands and amidst its groves of pine trees. The road to it, level as a bowling-alley, and red as a cherry, winds through over-arching and endless vistas of green. All along its length stands a stately growth of timber, which the æstheticism of the earlier colonists has left as a memento of the days when the Dutch, and not the English, flag floated over the land. About half-way we draw rein at Rondebosch—a township buried in groves and gardens—where there is a pretty cemetery to be seen, in which many an Irish name is registered. Hard-by lies the show-farm of Cape Town. We make a descent upon

its hospitable proprietor, a colossal Dutchman, whose cheery face beams from under a grey felt hat, shaped like a huge, inverted mushroom. He is ever ready to welcome strangers ; but his eyes brighten, and his mouth is wreathed in smiles when he learns that two of the assembled company belong to the much-abused phalanx which follows Parnell's leadership. He greets us warmly ; and, after a collation of varied fruits, washed down with home-made wine, he leads us round his vineyards and his peach orchards. There he is in his glory. An hour speeds by unnoticed as he explains to us, with quite a paternal affection, the characters and the capabilities of his wines and fruit-trees—their names, their properties, their qualities, their weaknesses, and the care he takes, and how he takes it, to protect them from their many enemies in the air above and in the earth beneath. Never was solicitude better bestowed, or returned with a higher rate of interest. What grapes ! what peaches ! There are acres and acres of land bearing both. And how they grow ! They would make the hair of our home gardeners grow grey with envy. Our housekeepers at home would all but weep for joy could they buy there as they can here, peaches at the rate of two shillings a bucketful, and grapes at a donkey-load for half-a-crown.

We are students of John Mitchell's "Gaol Journal."

We must, therefore, take a trip to Simon's Bay. An hour by rail from Cape Town and we reach it. A grim, deep, rocky land-bound estuary. On one side you are shown a rock rising from the sea, like a pillar, on which one fine day, not so very long ago, the Eng-

lish skipper of a transport ship dashed his costly charge to pieces. On every point round about are fortifications of the newest type, to be armed with cannon of the latest make, in process of construction; while, riding in the harbour, or at exercise off the shore, you spy a number of vicious-looking little vessels—gunboats, they are—almost flush with the water, so low, in fact, as to offer no perceptible mark for hostile artillery; while the one huge gun each carries is supposed to be able to do dreadful things to the Russian, or the Frenchman, or the German, should he ever come to Cape Town to do otherwise than buy coal.

Another thing to be done from Cape Town is a thirty miles drive. Starting round the Lion's Rump—a hill which juts out from under Table Mountain—you wheel to the left, and then for many a mile the road—cut in the face of the cliffs—runs along the sea shore. On the left as you go, scarred and riven mountains tower above you, covered on their lower slopes with a natural carpet of aloe, and prickly cactus, and wild geranium, with its violet blossom, and silver tree and mimosa scrub, and all the other countless products of the vegetable world whose names are the catalogue of South African flora; while, on the right, sheer down fall the cliffs—sheer to the ocean hundreds of feet below; and the road runs along, bending with the bays and inlets, curving with the spurs and promontories with no better protection for the wayfarer than an occasional boulder resting on its outward verge. Decidedly an awkward place with a nervous horse or a nervous driver; but

with a glorious view of the mountains and the sea. After a while there is another turn to the left. We pass through a narrow gorge. We find ourselves in another country. Behind us we have left the gaunt and stony wilderness, without a tenant, save an occasional wild goat. Before us now stretches, as far as the eye can carry, a garden—a paradise. A verdant and smiling region ; planted, cultivated, enclosed ; studded with cosy farmsteads, and occasional country mansions. As we drive on we learn that we are in the widely-renowned district of Constantia—(a name sacred with epicures a generation back)—where the noble wine so designated is grown and manufactured.

Alas ! for the brave days of old. The nineteenth century has brought many things to Cape Colony. Some good, some bad, some neither one nor t'other. But the worst of all the new things lately brought was that curse, that pest, the phylloxera. Vineyard after vineyard has succumbed to its ravages. It has given so serious a set-back to the wine industry of the colony, that it is only now beginning to revive. Whether the scourge will ever be wholly eradicated or not it is hard to say. Let us hope—in the interest of all discriminating toppers—that it may—and speedily. We return to Cape Town round the rear of Table Mountain. Occasionally we see on some rocky pinnacle the remains of a hoary, disused watch-tower, that a hundred years ago or so served for an alarm post against the frequent forays of the marauding Hottentots. They have, however, long outlived their usefulness. We have ample evidence of the fact in the vineyards rosy with luxuriant grapes, and in

the peach orchards bending to the ground under their loads of delicate fruit, through which our road lies. While ever and anon we pass pretentious avenues, closed by wide gateways on which are blazoned the armorial bearings of the Dutch and Huguenot pioneers who made the country what it is and the rich prey the conquering English found it. But enough of this. We are not sight-seers. Or, if we be, it is only in the interludes of the work we have come to do.

Two suns have barely set since we stepped upon the red soil of Africa when we find ourselves in harness again and with plenty of work cut out for us. A public meeting has been summoned. All are invited who sympathise with Home Rule for Ireland, or who wish to know what Home Rule for Ireland means. The public hall is packed. A strangely varied audience is gathered into it. There are some who come to carp and criticise, to cavil and find fault. There are some, also, who come with an honest purpose to hear the case of Ireland stated from the Irish side, what probably they have never heard before; but there is no mistaking the presence of the ever-faithful Irish there that night, for it is none other than a genuine Irish cheer—hearty, passionate, prolonged—that rings into the roof and into the air outside, and imparts its contagious passion to all within that hall in greeting to us, as we step upon our first African platform, to address our first audience in Africa. Our meeting is a great success. The prophets of the opposition had prophesied an abject failure. Their prophesies are sadly belied. In a pithy, sympathetic

speech our chairman—the popular representative of one of the city constituencies in the Cape Parliament—introduces us to our auditors. Henceforward all is plain sailing. Friends and foes alike are disappointed, perhaps. Our foes, that we give them no rant, no blood and thunder, no oratorical Donnybrook, such as they expect, or profess to expect, as synonymous with an Irish public meeting. Our friends are sadly disappointed, too, if they anticipated from us anything of that fire, that pathos, that soul-moving eloquence which poets and historians alike have ever associated, and rightly so, with Irish eloquence. For we are no orators ; we are but plain, blunt men who love their country, but we give them facts. We deal with our subject in a style plain and blunt and matter-of-fact. A style, it may be, better fitted to our prosaic business-like times than all the wealth and glory of a CURRAN'S metaphor, a PLUNKETT'S imagery, or a GRATTAN'S antithesis and epigram. We sketch in hard black lines the accursed stricture of English rule in Ireland. We lay bare in all its squalid nakedness the skeleton of Ireland's state, under English rule. And we sit down satisfied, and satisfying our friends likewise, that we have thrown a newer light upon the merits of our cause than has shone upon it yet among the Africanders ; and that we have given the other side some nuts to crack harder and tougher than they well can manage.

Good-by, Capetown, and kind Capetown hosts. Our faces are set for Kimberly—Kimberly of the diamond fields ! Kimberly, of which we have read and heard so much. Kimberly, the Golconda of our

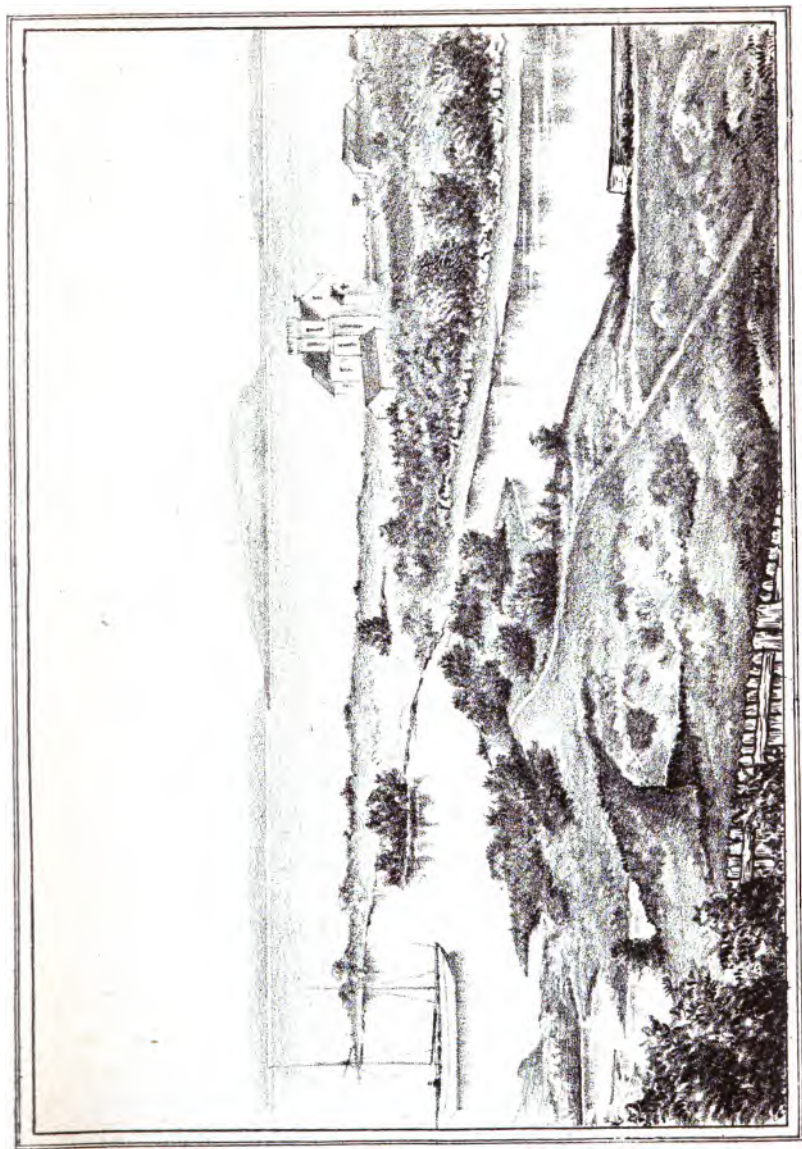


times ! Richer by far and more renowned than even its renowned prototype. The iron horse, puffing and snorting as if impatient with its heavy load, drags us along, and up and up through the barrier range which cuts the garden of Cape Colony off from the continent beyond. Weird is the scenery, and desolate in the extreme. Rocks piled on rocks, cliffs beetling over cliffs. Deep, dark gorges, through whose hidden recesses the mountain torrents foam and leap and roar in winter-time, now for the most part dry. Occasional tiny valleys, whose relative fertility but makes the encircling wildness more wild. High, soaring peaks, some wrapped in clouds, others standing bare, fierce, and defiant in their steely nakedness. Such is this barrier range. We reach the pass. We look back upon our track ; and with mute lips we inwardly confess that there's a beauty awesome, indescribable, grandiose in the extreme in the rugged, awful, deathlike solitude and blasted dreadfulness of utter desolation. A moment's pause, and down the steep incline we rush with inconceivable velocity. Another hour finds us toiling wearily along under the angry blaze of a tropical sun, over the treeless, shadeless scorched Karoo. On we toil in the stifling heat amid clouds of impalpable dust, and enveloped in a rapacious, bloodthirsty, hellish swarm of insatiable and utterly exasperating mosquitoes. Such heat ! The very atmosphere seems to stand still and to lean upon us. The wooden roofs of the railway cars seem but mere creatures of the imagination for all the guard they are against the fury of old Sol. We are too limp to move. Our lips and tongues are too parched

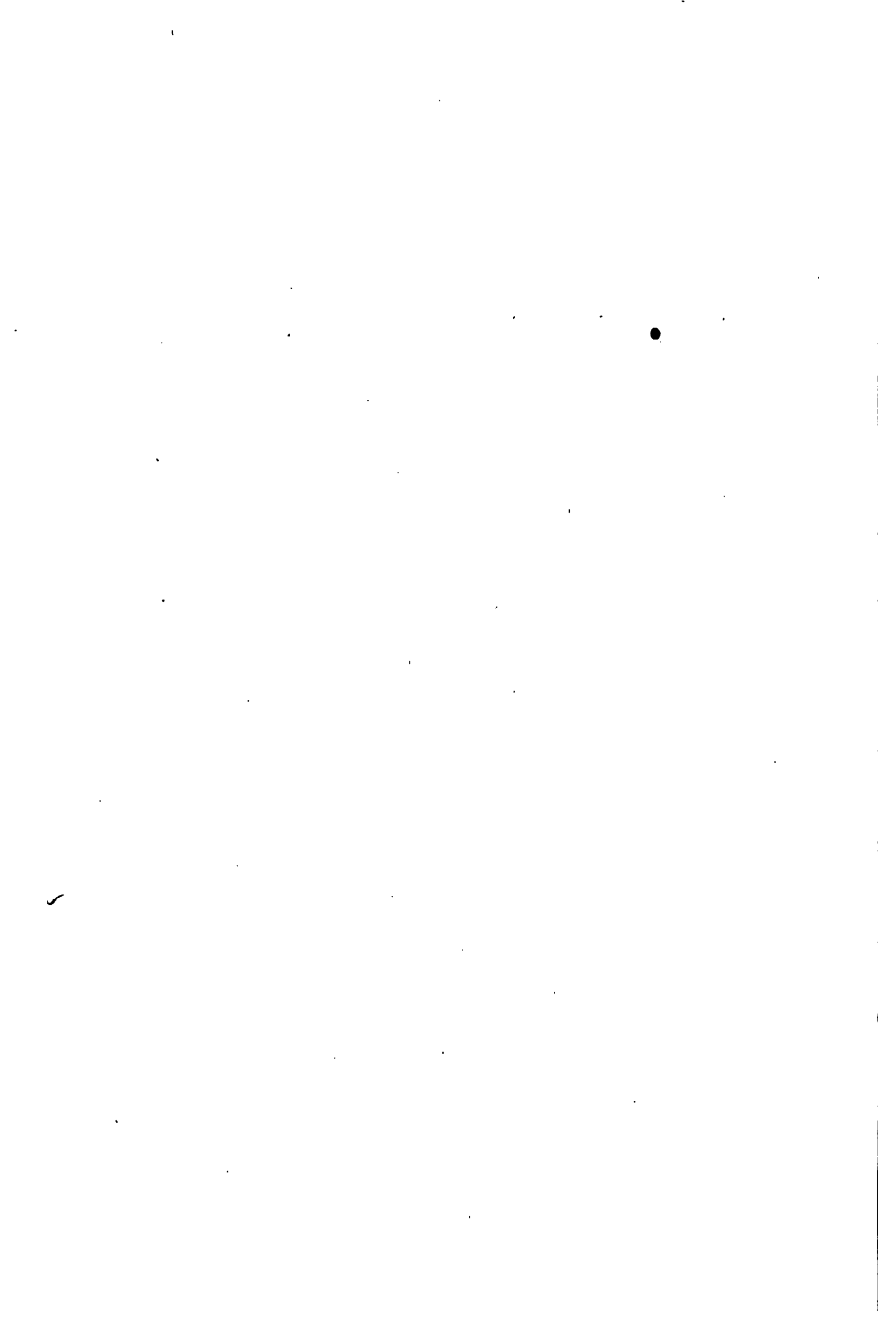
to speak ; there is no air except what the revolving of the grinding wheels throw up, and that comes to us under the form and in the substance of choking waves of dust. And such dust ! Finer than the finest powder that ever artist of the fair sex used, filling our eyes, our mouths, our nostrils, settling on everything, penetrating everywhere ; dense, opaque, all-permeating as the snow of an American blizzard. And the mosquitoes !—such mosquitoes ! Talk to me of pricks of conscience ! Mine is accommodating, and troubles me little ; but were it otherwise disposed I'd face its very worst and ultra-piercing prickings cheerily rather than the torture of those infernal pests. They had plagues in Egypt—so the Bible tells us. Had they a mosquito plague ? I can't believe it after this experience, unless it was that Pharaoh donned for the occasion a rhinoceros hide, as donkeys both before and since are said to have donned lions'. On that hypothesis I'll give in, but on no other ; for, while I have met mosquitoes in Europe, in America, in Australia, and in Polynesia, I never yet have met them fit to hold a candle to those devils of the Karoo. All day long, so circumstanced, we take our weary way—on all sides, for leagues upon leagues, stretches the howling wilderness. It is unlike anything in the shape of a desert to be met with anywhere else. Though here and there are portions which remind one now of the great Desert of Utah ; again of the sago-bush country lying between South Australia and New South Wales, or again, of the Mojave Desert in Arizona, or of the trackless wastes that spread south of the Rio Bravo, in Northern Mexico. But, taken

as a whole, the Karoo has a character entirely of its own. There is something in the metallic lustre of its rocks, in the colouring of its truncated hills, in the stubborn hardness of its scanty vegetation, and in the general dusky ruddiness of the whole specially and peculiarly and unmistakably African.

Now and then, as we move onwards, we see signs of life. Anon a solitary ostrich scuds along with clumsy gait; anon a herd of graceful antelopes scamper out of sight in a whirl of dust. Or our engine slackens its speed and moves at a walking pace, whistling shrilly the while, as a flock of Angora goats or of stupid sheep—numbering thousands, perhaps—cross the track and insist on crossing it, each and every one, because one of their number has already gone that way. There are sheep and goats in the Karoo. Ay! and men, too, and white men. Farmers of sheep or of ostriches—hardy, venturesome souls, who are content to settle down, far from their fellow-men, by the side of the desert springs, where, when times are good, they find small fortunes in the fleeces of their flocks or in the feathers of their ostriches; and who, when times are bad, live on hoping for better. Occasionally the railway passes their homesteads, low-lying and roughly built, sheltered by willow trees, perhaps sprung from sprigs cut from over Napoleon's grave in St. Helena, thousands of miles away, and growing with a marvellous luxuriance wherever a drop of water is to be found. Hard by will be the ostrich paddock, railed in with high wire palings, where these huge, ungainly birds lie on the ground in twos and threes, basking lazily in the



HINEMOA'S ISLAND, LAKE ROTORUA, NEW ZEALAND.



sun, or stalk about with a stateliness quite grotesque, plucking the desert weeds and shrubs, and feeding on whatever other fare the inhospitable earth provides. These creatures carry their commercial value in their wings and tails. From their tails and wings are plucked those graceful feathers which our grandmothers and great-grandmothers prized so highly for their head-gear. Fabulous as it may read, those feathers in the halcyon days of trade used to fetch one hundred pounds per lb. Now, however, things are changed, partly owing to the starting of rival farms in Australia and in America, but mainly owing to the change of fickle fashion. Forty pounds per lb. is reckoned a good price for ostrich feathers nowadays ; and a very good price indeed, many who are not ostrich farmers will think that ought to be. For a sleepless night and for another weary day we toil on over the Karoo. Towards evening, when we begin to feel our vital energy all but evaporated, someone calls out "Kimberley!" and we all start up at the welcome sound, thankful beyond words that at long last our purgatory is nearly ended.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE DIAMOND FIELDS OF KIMBERLY.

AS we approach Kimberly we get a general idea of the town. In rough outline, it is something similar to Fort Worth in Texas, though not in detail : built on the level plain, a jumble of crooked, narrow streets, straying among an irregular mass of low houses, almost wholly built of galvanised iron. It would be absolutely hideous were it not for the vivid and refreshing green of the innumerable trees and shrubs, and the gorgeous colouring of the lovely flowers with which the good taste of Kimberly's wealthy citizens has successfully combated its otherwise monotonous uniformity. The town has nothing architecturally pretentious about it. Everything is suggestive of hasty construction to meet a sudden and ever-increasing demand for housing on the part of its ever-increasing population now close upon forty thousand souls. Whatever its artistic merits, however, there is no room for doubt as to those of Kimberley's hospitality. We arrive more dead than alive. We are at once carried off by our friends, under whose anxious care we revive, and are speedily in a position to appreciate the blessings of good fare and of better company. We have the very best of good company in our Kimberly friends, the kindest and the most considerate likewise, and their feeling and their action

towards us is but a symbol of their devotion to our cause. With their help a meeting is organised—a meeting the success of which is never for a moment in doubt, and which in its material and immediate results takes the palm among all our meetings in South Africa. So again the good seed is sown, and is left to fructify in the care of zealous and loving hands; and again the Irish envoys have to chronicle the winning of new sympathy and of new support for Ireland.

We have a day or two to spare before we start for the Eastern Coast. Let's see what Kimberly has to show us. To begin with, there's the club, of which we have the run, and where—we make the note in passing for the benefit of other travellers—the coolest drinks and the best concocted in Southern Africa are to be had. And this is a point not to be despised in a temperature ranging from one hundred and eight to one hundred and twelve in the shade. Then there is the paddock, where pigeon matches are held. Cruel and debasing displays of skill! Outrages upon the sacred name of sport! Barbarous, inhuman atrocities, which, thank Heaven! have been ended at home, and which should be ended everywhere else. But Kimberly can do better than this in the sporting line. There is a racecourse, where several times a year you may back the winner if you are in luck; and there is a cricket field—and a model one—where the home cricketer misses, with a feeling of blank amazement, the emerald turf. There is no grass of any kind—nothing but bare ground, brown as a berry, rolled as hard as asphalte, and with



twenty-two yards of cocoa-nut matting between the stumps in lieu of our grass-grown crease. If the field is strange, the playing is not. 'Twould be hard to beat at the Oval or at Lords, and even Clongowes or Trinity might be surprised by it, as during our visit a touring team found to their cost, when Old England had to lower her flag before the Africander, who had only ten wickets to spare! But you'll say that clubs and pigeon matches and cricket grounds are to be found pretty nearly everywhere! Yes. But one doesn't expect to find them in the middle of the Karoo!

However, to see something we have not yet seen: Let us go to the "Diamond Market." The Diamond Market is Kimberly's Stock Exchange. We don't find much when we get there. A narrow, ill-paved street, abutting on another, and lined on each side with shanties of galvanised iron! That's all! Yet here it is that fortunes are lost and made, and millions of pounds' worth of diamonds change and rechange hands every year. A civil gentleman, well known among the heavy operators, invites us to follow him. He enters a building more pretentious than the rest—the head office of one of the large Mining Companies. We follow him into the strong room, and there, with the utmost nonchalance, he tumbles out a bag of rough diamonds upon a glassy counter, like a sample of oats, for our inspection. It is the result of one day's washing of the mine, and is worth?—well, a trifle over sixteen thousand pounds! Imagine the picture for yourselves, fair ladies! You who try to enhance your loveliness—which you can-

not do—with sparkling brilliants! There they lie, those idols of yours, tumbled about like bits of dross. I am no admirer of diamonds. I think them hard and cold and unsympathetic stones. Give me the red ruby, or the blue sapphire, or the green emerald, or the mystic, ever-changing opal for a gem. But there those diamonds lie. And the man is yet unborn who can look upon them lying there, those scintillating crystals for whom human beings so often sell their very souls, without some sentiment of curiosity and of interest, not unmingled with emotion. We pick them up, one by one, and examine them. Our entertainer criticises them, marks their peculiarities, and prices them with practised eye. They are of all sorts and sizes. Some white, some yellowish, some big as hazel-nuts, some no bigger than the head of a pin. They are rough and dull-coated, just as they come from the mine. The possession of a single one of them, without a magistrate's license, would render the possessor liable to seven years' penal servitude. This is what we are told, and it shows us the dark side of the picture. So great is the temptation to unhappy or unfortunate men to possess themselves somehow and anyhow of these glittering particles, carrying, as most of them do, within them a little fortune, or perchance a large one, with all that a fortune implies; and so many and so daring have been the attempts at possession, that the Cape Town Parliament, in its wisdom, has passed the I.D.B., or Illicit Diamond Buying Acts, which impose the penalties, under the conditions above described. While on this subject one might be tempted to dilate

upon theories anent the distribution of wealth, and upon the use of the earth and of the things under the earth ; but we must not philosophise to-day. For we are neither economists, nor theorists, nor Socialists ; we are merely tourists for the nonce. We only say, "That's a hard law." But when next we meet one of those sorrowful gangs of poor creatures called "convicts," toiling away upon public works until they toil themselves to death or to the end of their sentence, we come to the conclusion that if this law is to be applied at all, it were better applied, not to the men who have stolen, but to those other men who have tempted them to steal.

Our mentor has another surprise in store for us. Diving down into some hidden recess of his safe he pulls out something wrapped in tissue-paper. "I'll show you something now," he says, "the like of which you have hardly seen before, and the like of which you won't soon see again. Here's a diamond for you. It's called the 'Pam.' It came from Jagersfontein, in the Orange Free State, and it is valued at forty thousand pounds." He wipes the glass counter with the sleeve of his coat. He opens the paper gingerly. Tenderly he places its contents before us, and there, whiter than the driven snow, purer than the purest crystal, virgin as when it came from the bowels of the earth, lies this geological prodigy ! It is as large as a walnut. There is not a flaw in it, nor a scratch upon its smooth sides. Its unpolished skin dulls it a little ; but there is no concealing the sparks that fly from it in the sunlight, nor the many-coloured fires that glow within. What shall its history be ?

Goodness knows! But it is safe to prophesy that exalted rank among the aristocracy of its caste awaits it. It may yet flash in some kingly diadem over brilliant courts. It may outshine many another of its kind in those glittering throngs, where pomp and fashion and wealth and power are gathered together. Yes, it is born to take a place amid the grandeur and the vanity and the pride of this world of ours. This pale, unsympathetic stone!—dug by a Kaffir from the clayey bed where it had lain since before men were, and where, but for an accident, it might still lie. A history so like many a human career—begun by lucky chance, borne on by natural, innate power, and ending only where that ends! As such it interests me. Otherwise, interest of mine there is none in it. Had I forty thousand sovereigns to invest, I'd find some other security.

We have seen the diamonds. Now for the mines. There are three or four of them round Kimberly—huge, cavernous openings in the ground, like the craters of extinct volcanoes. Their sides are tunnelled in all directions. Here and there rise scaffoldings of every shape and size; some to receive the gray-blue clay in which the precious stones are hidden, others to hoist it up aloft, where it is placed in trucks. These, when full, are drawn off in trains to the drying pans—flat, open spaces, acres in extent—where the “blue,” as it is familiarly termed, is left exposed in the open air to decompose under the action of sun and wind and rain. Taking the valuable nature of the deposit into account, one is surprised to see no guard about these pans—we are so used to the sight

of the ubiquitous policemen in Ireland—but occasionally we spy a Zulu or a Kaffir with a bundle of assegais in his hand. He can run like an antelope, and split an apple at fifty paces. And, for what guarding is to be done, he is guard sufficient. When the “blue” is sufficiently decomposed by this drying process, it is again loaded on trucks and carried away to the washing places. There it is passed through a series of cylindrical metal sieves, of different sizes, revolving at a high rate of speed, and through which water rushes. The slimy deposit is washed away, the stones embedded in it are thrown out into trays, according to their size; the contents of these trays are carefully picked over, and the diamonds extracted by native workmen. They are superior for this work to white men; their touch is more delicate, their eyesight better; they do more work, and they cost far less. All the hard labour of the Kimberly mines is done by negroes. Naturally, they can stand the terrible climate better than their masters. It is quite incredible the work they do, taking the stifling heat into account, and the dreadfully laborious nature of the work. But they are magnificent specimens of humanity, these blacks. We have always heard so, but we find we have under-estimated their physical gifts and capabilities when we visit the compound.

Each mine has a compound attached to it. This compound is a huge rectangular structure, covering perhaps five or six acres, and resembling a barrack in its internal arrangement. As in everything else at Kimberly, galvanised iron enters mainly into its construction. Walls, roofs, partitions, everything, in fact,

is of galvanised iron, painted white. By the iron door stand two sentinels, armed with assegais and knobkerries—species of clubs. No one may enter these charmed precincts without a written order. No trouble is made, however, about our admittance. On the contrary, all is civility and attention. For we have regulation credentials, we are in good company, and, did the worst befall, the Commandant of this quasi-military establishment is, like ourselves, an Irishman. We enter the spacious enclosure. All around the walls run sheds and houses. Some are dwellings, others are recreation places. In the centre is a vast tank, or swimming bath, in which twenty or thirty dark forms are disporting themselves like so many porpoises. They are men off duty, and are making the most of their leisure. And merrily they splash about, while the place rings with their cheery laughter. At the further end of the compound, cut from everything else, and with a separate yard of its own, is the hospital, in one portion of which accidents are treated, and in the other, maladies. The quarters which line the compound are divided into sections, each one of which is tenanted by members of a different tribe. You have them here of every nationality south of the Zambesi. Kaffirs from the East ; Basutos and Betchuanas from the West ; Griquas, Swazis, Zulus, Hottentots, Matabeles—not to mention members of many another swarthy nation. As a rule, each section is under control of its paramount chief. For there are chiefs here, and mighty war chiefs, whose sable breasts bear many a scar won upon many a hard-fought field. They are democrats, these Africans.

With them it is no disgrace in high or low to labour. The better the worker the better the man. Such is the spirit of their Socialism. They can teach us many things, these Africans ! To Kimberly they come from every region—north, south, east and west. Many a hundred, many a thousand mile they come on foot. There they engage to work for such a time, and at such wages as will enable them to return to their far-off homes with a little sum of money—to them a fortune—with which, if young, they may buy cattle and marry wives ; if old, settle down to spend their declining years in peace and comfort in their straw-thatched kraals. From the day they enter the compound, to the day their contract ends, they never leave it. So strict are the precautions against I.D.B. Many are the stories, curious some, and more laughable than edifying, of the tricks some of the old hands play to satisfy the evil promptings of their tempters outside. These negroes are easily managed. Very seldom is there anything approaching to disorder in the compound. When there is, it usually arises from international bickerings between rival tribes. Taking them all round, they are a splendid race. Many of them are perfect giants, with the thews and sinews of gladiators, and torsos that would be the admiration and the envy of a Phidias or a Michael Angelo. Withal peaceable and kindly, as easily led as children, and as easily amused. Were it otherwise, the ten or twelve white men who have charge of one of these compounds would find it no easy task to deal with the seven or eight hundred athletic warriors it usually contains. So much for Kimberly and for the people

in it. Our time is limited and our space. Else would there be little difficulty in filling a volume with what could be written concerning one of the most interesting cities the world contains.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### PORT ELIZABETH.

ANOTHER weary journey over hundreds of miles of desert. We have been scorched, parched, baked, and nearly stung to death; but 'tis nearly over. And now the cool breeze from the Indian Ocean fans us back to life. We are at Port Elizabeth. From the shady "stoop" of our hotel, over whose trellis-work the glorious Bougainvillia hangs in festoons of flame, we look down upon Algoa Bay. The city spreads beneath us and stretches away on either hand—substantial, well built, and well laid out. There is a fleet of traders at anchor in the roadstead, and beyond in the misty distance lies the island of Santa Cruz. There it was that the intrepid Portuguese navigator, Diaz, the South African Columbus, planted the symbol of man's redemption in the sands. And there the cross remained, and braved the storms of centuries, until in recent days some English Vandal sailors tore it down and burned it.

Port Elizabeth is a thriving place. It is the chief emporium of the colonial trade in wool, and wine, and mohair and ostrich feathers. The Wool Exchange is



well worth visiting ; likewise the mammoth cellars where the African vintages are stored, and where better wines than we wot of in the old country, and quoted at prices that would be the undoing of half our old country wine merchants, may be seen and sampled. Ireland has friends in Port Elizabeth—staunch friends and true, yielding to none in their loyalty to her cause nor in their sympathy with her down-trodden people. From the date of the delegates' acceptance of their pressing and cordial invitation to their city there had been nothing but preparation for their visit by the Port Elizabeth Irishmen. When the time arrived for putting these preparations to the test, the outcome was creditable in the highest degree. The public meeting was but a repetition of the previous triumphs at Kimberly and at Cape Town. Unbounded enthusiasm and generous help for the good cause. But Port Elizabeth stands alone among all the cities of South Africa in her relations to Ireland. She has the honour of being the scene of the inauguration of the first South African branch of the Irish National League. There the pioneer branch of the Irish National League was founded—a hardy plant, and one which promises to become a vigorous offshoot from the parent stem. If there be anything practical in the patriotism of the Irish Afrikaner this plant should spread its tendrils far and wide over the land, grasping every Irish centre in its embrace and bringing them into close and intelligent contact, into active and useful unity, with the millions of their race throughout the universe.

How small the world is, after all ! and how universal the stamp of Irish association ! There is a grave in Port Elizabeth inseparably linked with the recollections of Ireland's recent history, and with an episode as dark and drear and tragic as any of the many tragedies her sad annals recall. By the blue waters of Algoa Bay the bones of an Irishman have found their last resting-place, whose deeds have earned for his unhallowed memory infamy undying, and have entitled him to rank among the loathsome horde of SIRRS and SWANS and HEMPENSTALLS and TALBOTS and LE CARONS, whose ghoulish forms stand out in dark relief from the hideous picture of England's rule of Ireland. JAMES CAREY lies near Port Elizabeth. We visited the spot. A more awful lesson was never read, nor in more awful eloquence, than the moral of that far-off grave. It would even seem as if the very earth refused to harbour his wretched clay ; and as if nature herself were imbued with the sentiment of his countrymen towards this poor, weak, desperate, and dishonoured tool and victim of Dublin Castle officialism. It would tax the power of a DANTE'S pen to record the horrors of that grave. Mine is miserably inadequate to the task. Upon the bare, leafless, lifeless breast of a sandhill, where the whirlwinds eddy round like evil genii, and where the scorching, searing, noisome desert blast sweeps across to the sea with the wail and the shriek of a banshee, lies a heap of blood-red stones. Upon one of these some passer-by has scratched with a rusty nail—"Carey, the informer." Nothing more. Such is the tomb ; and such the epitaph. Around lie the bones of negro convicts who have suffered the

extreme penalty of the law. While the only shade that ever strays over that grave comes as the setting sun sinks to his fiery couch behind the grim and ghastly structure of the adjoining jail. In that company, and amid those surroundings, the body of the Irishman who lured his countrymen to crime, and sold them to barbarous death for English gold, awaits the last trumpet's sound. Was ever awful lesson read in more awful way? An epitome of English rule in Ireland! The informer's deadliest foe could wish him no worse fate. Let us hope that his poor soul has found more mercy and less justice at Mercy's fountainhead than his body has from nature and his memory from mankind.

From Port Elizabeth we wend our way to Uitenhage; a little paradise, buried among wooded hills, where grateful springs bubble up on every side and everything is sweetly green. There we find a prosperous little colony of sturdy Irish farmers, and at their head a dear old Irish priest, full of the fire of Irish patriotism, and made in the self-same mould as his Menapian sires of '98. His presbytery is a curiosity. Standing in the midst of his garden, it is literally lost in a labyrinth of flowers and creepers, of shrubs and vines and fruit-trees, all planted and tended with his own hands, and so wildly luxuriant that a stranger would find it impossible to say where the garden ends or where the presbytery begins. Amid the delicious shade of those sylvan bowers, in the company of their warm-hearted tenant, one would be tempted to linger for ever, even in memory. But we are only birds of passage. We are soon on the wing

again, and away over the mountains and their leafy covering, past many a Kaffir kraal, over the sandy wastes of the dreaded Karoo, we fly back to Kimberly.

At this point, fellow-travellers, if you are minded to follow me still further into the wilds, leave all your luggage behind. Fill your water-bottles, cram your tobacco-pouches, tighten your belts, and come along. I'll show you something of a style of travelling the like of which you have not tried yet—a style of travelling very unlike the average tourist's ordinary experience. We are going on a coaching trip not far short of seven hundred miles, over the "golden vale" of Africa to the modern "El Dorado." I mean to take you—an you're not afraid to rough it—through one of the richest and most fertile countries in the whole wide world; and to show you some of the outward signs and symptoms of that most contagious malady, the gold fever. The genuine fever, with its incredible accompaniments, very much as you would have seen it in the "Forties" in California, or in the "Fifties" in Victoria or in New South Wales. Forward then for the Transvaal, the Boers, and the gold fields!

Four a.m. by Kimberly town clock! The horn has sounded! The coach is starting! Look alive! We tumble out from under our mosquito curtains. It is dark still, but Heaven be praised it is still cool. Our toilet is completed in a trice. A minute to swallow a cup of coffee, and away we run to the coach office. Most of our company have already arrived, and are fixing themselves into their places. The fixing does not take long. Nobody has much to fix barring his

individuality. Luggage is unknown. Space for stowage will not allow of it, and the tariff absolutely forbids it. A white umbrella lined with green; a huge felt hat, a couple of feet in diameter, a water-bottle and a pipe, constitute the experienced voyager's outfit. We clamber up to our seats behind the conductor, secured a week beforehand, as we object to smothering inside. We prefer the outside roasting with the chance of air. Twang goes the horn! The whip cracks like a pistol-shot; and away we clatter, at a hand-gallop, through the dark and deserted streets of drowsy Kimberly. Past the market-place, tenanted at this hour only by sleeping spans of bullocks, and their sable drivers also sleeping, curled up in their rough karosses under the wagon wheels. Past the native quarter, and we are out upon the desert. The rosy morn begins to break. Our team steadies down to a trot. The swaying of our huge and cumbersome vehicle abates enough to relieve us of the necessity of hanging on for dear life. We are able to look about us and to take stock of our equipage. It is an immense structure, this coach. American built; swinging upon enormous leather springs. Twelve passengers are wedged inside, eight of us on the top, and our two drivers to boot. Our team numbers fourteen spanking horses, not very big, but hard and wiry. They are yoked two and two, and are driven, excepting the wheelers, with droppers from a single pair of reins. Less than ten horses are never yoked to these coaches, while, on show occasions, as many as sixteen or eighteen are driven in them. Of all the coaching I have done in the United States, Mexico,

and in Australasia, excepting some of the New Zealanders, these Transvaal coachmen take the cake. Every ten or twelve miles we outspan and inspan, as the Dutchmen have it, in other words, change teams ; and now at a canter, now at a trot, we rumble and jolt and swing along between these breaks.

A few miles out of Kimberly we cross the border into the Orange Free State—the Dutch twin-sister Republic of the Transvaal, but there is no perceptible change in the landscape. All is arid and parched and brown. Whatever little of green there is comes from an occasional cactus, or a group of dwarfed mimosas, or a thicket of the impenetrable and aptly-named wait-a-bit thorn. Now and then emaciated specimens of sheep and goats are passed, or still more rarely in the distance we spy a springbok or a blesbok, the last remnant of the vast herds of game, that, before civilization (?) with its repeating rifles, came along, swarmed in countless numbers over these dusty plains. Gigantic vultures sometimes soar above us, or perch in groups upon the stony rises, where, at a distance, they look like men on sentry-go, so huge are they. Our road is no more than a track over the veldt ; our coach is the only speedy and regular method of conveyance. Since the outbreak of the gold fever, however, an enormous freight trade has grown up. It is done by carriers, many of whose wagons we pass during the day—rough, lumbering contrivances, drawn on tediously by twenty or thirty sober-looking oxen, and so we rumble along. The morning deepens into day. The sun blazes down upon us without let or hindrance. There is no

protecting shadow anywhere. It is rather warm. For the past few days the thermometer registers one hundred and ten degrees in the shade. But we are getting broiled into shape, and we endure the heat somehow. We smoke and yarn, crack jokes and talk of all things and sundry, from the last quotations on the diamond and gold mining stock exchanges to the latest rumours of German annexations on the West Coast ; from "Robert Elsmere" to the possibilities of the next general election, and imperceptibly the time slips by.

In the afternoon we reach the Vaal, the boundary line between the two Dutch Republics. We stop for twenty minutes by an eccentrically-constructed mud hut, calling itself an hotel—perchance the "Grand Hotel," but on this point my recollection fails me—where we eat what we can of an execrable meal of tough, half-cooked beef, and nothing else, for which we pay at a rate worthy of the Hotel Bristol. We are then ferried over the river, coach and horses and all, on a pontoon of crazy build, to the other side. As we scramble up the slope, a tall, bearded man, with his hands in his pockets, hails us. He is attired in a flannel shirt and long, home-made leather leggings. He wears a big, brown, wide-brimmed hat upon his head, and in his mouth a big, black pipe. Through a little fog of smoke puffs he shouts to us collectively :-- "Have you anything contraband?" "No!" we all shout back in chorus. "All right!" he answers, and away we go. This easygoing if formidable-looking personage is the representative of the Customs Department of the South African Republic. We are

now in the Transvaal. When we reach the summit of the river bank the scenery changes as if by magic. Behind us we have left the wilderness and desolation. Before us spreads a paradise of delights. As far as the eye can reach a gently-undulating prairie rolls away, green as a leek, covered with luxuriant grass reaching higher than a man's knee. Clumps of stately mimosas are scattered about, park-like, as if planted by human hands, while all sorts and colours of lovely wildflowers spangle the velvety sward. The soil is a deep dark red or black loam. Every few miles there are springs and water-courses. Small wonder is it that the Boers fought hard for such a land! Small wonder either the anxiety of rapacious Jingoës to turn them out of it, when, in addition to its marvellous fertility, we come to consider its apparently inexhaustible mines of gold and silver, of coal and iron! All through the afternoon and evening we roll on through this Eden.

About 10 p.m. we reach our camping-ground — a nameless hamlet, consisting of three or four galvanized-iron shanties. We scramble down before the largest one, stiff and sore and ravenous, dying for something eatable, and eager to make the best of the four hours' stay we have here. Horror of horrors! the fires are out. There is nothing to eat; but we can have something to drink, we are told. We are not inclined, however, to drink bad beer at six shillings a half-bottle, nor Cape smoke—a vitriolic compound of brimstone and fusil oil—at any price. “What about beds?” There are no beds. “No beds?” “No”; the down coach came in an hour ago, and, besides, there came a ‘special’ coach an hour before, and all the



beds are gone. But you may find a shakedown somewhere. Go in and see." And we go behind the rough-and-ready bar into the rougher and readier region adjoining. Half the barn constituting the "hotel" is screened off by a partition hung on ropes of old sacks and tattered chintz. This is again divided into smaller chambers in like manner. We grope down the central gangway visiting each cubicle in turn. They are all occupied. Most of the occupants are fast asleep; some of them wake at our entry and growl to us drowsily, and with an added wealth of choicest metaphor, to go further; none of them show the least inclination to make room for us; and though despair makes us very bold, we do not somehow feel quite equal to the task of evicting them. The gangway is the only chance; no help for it. So upon the mud floor we bestow ourselves as best we may, and upon the softest portions of its uneven surface we can find. In three minutes we are all snoring in concert, as sound asleep as if we lay upon feather beds.

We fancy we have hardly closed our eyes when we open them again, and spring to our feet. There are sounds of snorting, and kicking, and stumbling. By the flickering glimmer of a couple of dilapidated lanterns, we notice a universal shaking of the canvas walls of our caravanseraï. What's the matter? The down coach, which starts an hour before us is inspanning. Its human freight are on the move. This settles the question of sleeping longer. We all swarm into the bar.

## CHAPTER V.

## SOUTH AFRICA.

THE boss has not been in bed at all, judging from his grumpy and sleepy appearance. He is busy uncorking bottles, whilst at one end of the deal plank, which does justice at once for bar-counter and dining-table, he has rigged up a contrivance like an Australian billy-can over a paraffin lamp in which he is cooking something. Breakfast! is now the cry. We are ravenous. Small wonder! The menu is neither elaborate nor profuse. But we are not disposed to be critical under the circumstances. And there is a glorious sensation of universal freedom. Everyone does the best he can for himself. One of our party with a genius for foraging unearths a tin of English biscuits and a case of American potted beef. These are at once appropriated, divided, and devoured. The feast is washed down with a compound called coffee, brewed from roasted maize, or beans, or peas. There is dark-coloured Natal sugar to be had. Amid the babel of conversation somebody calls for milk. At once there is a dead silence. "Is there any milk?" he asks innocently again. The host glares at him, speechless, gathering his breath for a general damnation in Dutch. "Sar," puts in a tall, gaunt Yankee, who has annexed the only chair in the establishment, "do your mother know you're out?" at which sally

there is a huge guffaw, and the "milkman," as we forthwith dub him, disappears. The down coach leaves ; and we leave shortly afterwards, each man paying down his crown before he goes.

The country, through which we travel to-day, is, if anything, richer and more beautiful than that through which we travelled yesterday. Occasionally upon the slope of some gentle eminence we sight a native kraal ; a collection of neat, circular, hive-shaped huts, beautifully thatched with reeds, clustering round the larger and more pretentious habitation of the head man or chief, constructed of similar materials, with a stoop, or verandah, running all round ; while about the pretty village is a high, impenetrable barricade of interwoven wait-a-bit thorns. Now and then the coach-track runs past a Boer farmhouse, stoutly and compactly built of sun-dried bricks—like the Mexican adobes—with its vineyard lying in front of it, and its paddocks adjoining fenced in by hedgerows of orange trees, and of peach, and apricot, and fig-trees. And here betimes we prevail upon our conductor to tarry awhile as we invest recklessly in grapes and water-melons and apricots, and all the rest. On reaching our halting-place in the evening we find ourselves in better luck than we were the night before. The down coach has not arrived. There is a wash-out, they say. We bless the wash-out ; pray that the road may be mended when we get there on the morrow ; and occupy the beds. But fortune is a fickle jade. She smiles upon us only for an hour or two. Sometime last midnight the air trembles to a most infernal din. We start from our couches, and in a trice are all in

the centre of the shed. Matches are produced, and a light is procured. By the doorway a strange sight presents itself. A confused heap of kicking, thumping, shouting, and blasphemous humanity writhes upon the floor. A free fight is going on. The sleeping guests turn out and make confusion worse confounded. There is a rush of newcomers through the entrance, and we are borne back while the uproar increases and extends. At last the innkeeper appears upon the scene, with a lantern in his hand—a huge, brawny, bushy-bearded Dutchman. Evidently he is a man of action and used to War's alarms; for, flinging his lantern to an onlooker, he plunges into the thick of the turmoil, and, with a liberal expenditure of kicks, and cuffs, and curses, he succeeds in separating the combatants. They stagger to their feet and stare blankly round. One of them—evidently very intoxicated—sputters out spasmodically between his efforts to recover his wind: “Beg par’n—q-qu-quite a m’stake—pol’-gise.” Everybody stares at everybody else, and nobody can make head nor tail of it all. Finally, as further sleep is out of the question we adjourn to the bar-room to discuss the situation.

As all our conjectures lead to nothing towards its elucidation, it is moved to hold a court of inquiry, and carried *nem con*. We elect our Yankee companion Judge of the Assize. He takes his seat with becoming dignity in the corner, atop of a brandy cask. We all gather round. Some of us hold up lanterns. His Honour calls for the guilty parties. They stand, or stagger, self-confessed. One is the intoxicated gentleman, and the other one of our company. Neither seem yet to know whether he stands upon his head

or upon his heels. They are brought forward. The judge peremptorily demands of them what they have to say why immediate sentence should not be passed upon them. At the word "sentence" there is an outcry from the body of the court :—" Let's have the evidence." And we have the evidence, which, though mainly circumstantial, puts us shortly in full possession of the facts of this important case. The facts were these. The intoxicated gentleman—a traveller by the delayed down coach—when hunting in our compound for a bed, bestowed himself upon one already occupied. He awoke the occupier, who resented his intrusion. Argument was thrown away upon him, for he called force into requisition to maintain himself upon the bed, and force replied to force, and all in the dark. Hence arose the scrimmage, which grew into the cataclysm that ended our hard-earned slumbers. All this and more, having been made plain to the public satisfaction, the judge made speech. Having summed up the evidence with great legal acumen, and expatiated eloquently upon the heinousness of the crime, he delivered his judgment—copiously interlarded with quotations from the Declaration of American Independence—condemning the criminals there and then to stand drinks all round : the one for attacking, the other for being attacked. The sentence was there and then executed.

Next day we broke our fast at Potchestroom, a lovely village shadowed by Eucalypti, where we enjoyed a good meal in a first-class hotel, a very palace by contrast to our previous experiences in that line. The same night, about 9 p.m., we rumbled into Johannis-

berg. Amongst the strangest of strange aggregations of humanity Johannesburg holds a foremost place. It is an extraordinary city. Barely two years old in the early part of 1889, its population had already mounted to close on 30,000 souls. A more variously mixed community it would be difficult to find. Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Oceana are each represented there. Christians, Pagans, Mohammedans, Jews, Brahmins, Buddhists—all religions are there commingled. Such is the power of gold, and such its irresistible attraction for poor weak human nature. Though more extensive, the general aspect of Johannesburg is not unlike that of Broken Hill in New South Wales, where the search for silver has built up a city in the wilderness with equal rapidity and with almost similar surroundings. All round Johannesburg lie the gold mines. The city occupies the centre of an elliptical basin, on the summit of a table-land some four thousand feet above the sea level. It is judiciously laid out and of noble proportions, but in 1889 its broad streets and spacious squares were defined merely by long lines of pickets, while all about spread a grey wilderness of ramshackle rambling stores and habitations of every conceivable size and shape, uniformly constructed of the inevitable galvanised iron. At that date there existed but two substantial stone edifices. The Post-office, which, but for a slight defect, would be a fine architectural specimen—and the Stock Exchange. The next best building would be the Clubhouse, and a very comfortable Clubhouse, too. In such a centre of feverish speculation the Stock Exchange is naturally the centre of life and of attraction, and a lively centre

it is, in full working swing, when the wide street outside is literally blocked by excited crowds, selling and buying and bartering and bargaining the thousand and one different scrips and stocks which flood the financial market. Some are genuine; some are not. That makes no difference; nobody asks, and nobody cares. It is a case of selling and buying, floating and financing, from morning till night; and when the Exchange closes, in the hundreds of hotels and groggeries about the city it is a case of selling and buying, and floating and financing till the morning comes again. It is a lively place, is Johannesburg. We find it so, at least; and shortly after our advent, among the sights of the streets Zulu sandwichmen are to be seen, with bells in their hands to attract attention, with "Home Rule for Ireland" placarded upon their backs, and an announcement of a public meeting.

The meeting takes place at night. The theatre is crammed to suffocation. A more mixed, cosmopolitan and wholly uproarious meeting never was held before. Half the audience come to laugh and shout and see a "Home Ruler." At least one-half of the other half come to curse Home Rule and all its works and pomps. But all remain to cheer. Even an English Tory M.P. visiting the Transvaal to sell rifles to the Boers, found salvation there, or said he did. Let us hope so, anyhow. Before sunrise next morning we are perched on the top of the Pretoria coach and are well away upon the Veldt by daybreak. A wash-out disturbs the even tenor of our way. We are caught in a thunderstorm. Those African thunderstorms are terrible things. The sky is as clear as clear can be, the heat is barely bear-

able. A Boer beside us points to the far-distant horizon and shakes his head. We look in the direction, but notice nothing at first. Presently a little cloud appears, remains for a moment stationary, and then moves towards us, slowly to begin with, then more and more rapidly, growing and extending athwart the heavens as it comes. We are so struck by its appearance that we forget all else besides. Suddenly we are told to look behind. We turn, and lo! another cloud is advancing towards us, black and ominous, from the opposite quarter. And now the sun is darkened; daylight gives way to dusk, and dusk to inky night. Clouds rush up from every section of the sky and join the opposing battle-hosts. They crash together, with an appalling outburst of aerial artillery right over our heads. Peel follows on peel and roar upon roar. The lightning flares, and blazes and plays about us, and runs over the ground in rivers of flame. The din is deafening. We are all but blinded by incessant flashes. Suddenly down comes the rain. None of your home rain, but a regular water-spout. Down it pours in one vast torrent, sweeping over the plain, and covering it with water two or three inches deep in as many minutes. The hail succeeds. And such hail. Hailstones as large as marbles—ay, as walnuts occasionally. There is no keeping outside the coach. The trembling horses stop, half mad with terror. We throw ourselves down from our seats, and crush inside the coach, or under it—anywhere, for shelter from the icy bullets. The storm subsides as rapidly as it arose. The clouds break, scatter, and vanish. The sun shines out, and his scorching rays soon dry us. On we go again.



A thunderstorm, such as I have described, caught us about four miles from what had been the day before the dry bed of a creek. When we draw up, upon the bank, before us extends a foaming roaring, rushing, turbid torrent, a quarter of a mile in width. There is no hope of crossing. It is eight or nine feet deep at least in the middle, and nothing would live in such a maelstrom. So we camp there, and wait while the water runs away. One hour ; two hours ; three hours, and still the river foams along in apparently undiminished volume. The eager spirits of the party chafe at the delay. "Let's chance it," they say. But the old hands shake their heads. "You'll only get drowned." So we wait and wait. By-and-by a Zulu joins the group. He is walking home from Kimberly. We ask him what he thinks. He grins, and shrugs his shoulders. "I vote we wade it," says one. "Go on you," says another. But he doesn't go. "Me go," said the Zulu. "Bravo, Sambo," sings everybody ; and down the bank, lithe as a panther, strides the warrior. In he goes without turning his head. The water reaches his waist. Another second and he disappears. There is a cry "He's gone." Not a bit of it. Fifty yards down the current his black head appears. He shakes it, and then with even sweep forces his way to the other side. He swims and swims ; but there is no stemming that Niagara, and when at last he touches bottom and mounts the opposite bank, he is three hundred yards below where we stand. He picks his way along the verge, slowly and gravely, until he comes abreast of us, thence he waves his hand with a warning gesture, and seating himself upon a stone, he waits. We follow

his example, and we improve upon it by setting our pipes agoing, and under the shadow of a clump of aloes we inhale the delicious fumes of that most delicious of all tobaccos, grown and made in the Transvaal, and sold there at one shilling the pound. What is the matter with our Zulu friend? He is growing uneasy. He has risen from his seat and is moving up and down the water-side. "Surely he is not coming back?" But he is. In he goes with a splash and a plunge, and five minutes later he is shaking himself dry on our side. We give him a cheer as he lands. "But what on earth does he want?" This is soon ascertained when he comes up to us. "Tobacco wet," he says. Talk of devotion to a cause! Talk of determination in overcoming obstacles! Talk of heroism in pursuit of some glorious end! This Zulu doth make cowards of us all. He has only risked his life to secure a smoke! All our tobacco pouches are at his disposal, and at once we insist upon his retaining the largest one. He and I swop pipes.

Towards sundown the flood has so much abated that we pull through it, though the water washes through the coach. The afternoon of the following day we reach Pretoria, the capital of the South African Republic. There the President, Paul Kruger, lives—"Uncle Paul," as his countrymen call him; and there the Transvaal Parliament—the Volksraad—holds its sessions. Pretoria is a neat, cheerful, well-shaded town of some three thousand inhabitants. It is built round a spacious central square, in the middle of which stand the Dutch church—the principal building in the place, a large, plain, rough, though not unpleasant structure.

The evening of our arrival a Home Rule meeting is held. There are not many Irishmen at Pretoria ; but those there are are good and earnest ones. That they make manifest on this occasion by turning out at an hour's notice to welcome to the far-off metropolis of Dutch Africa the representatives of the nation which gave them birth. Next morning we have an interview with President Kruger at six o'clock. The President is a typical Boer. Tall, stout, active, and full-bearded. He looks less than fifty, though over sixty, and strikes one at once as shrewd, clear-headed, resolute, and kindly withal. He knows all about Ireland ; watches with interest the course of Irish politics, and entertains still a lively recollection of the courtesy of the Irish members of Parliament during his visit to London some years ago. Like all his countrymen, Paul Kruger is a farmer and clings closely to his simple country habits. He rises with the sun ; holds all his receptions from six to eight ; devotes himself to public affairs until noon ; and then leaves town, when, if you want to find him, you must mount your horse and search for him upon the veldt.

And now good-by, Africa ! Another week and we wave our adieux to Table Mountain, with its romantic associations, shrouded in its hood of cloud ; and as we look back to the swarthy land of gold and diamonds from the deck of the swift clipper which carries us bravely to fresh fields of effort for the cause, we pray that some day it may again be our good fortune to revisit the scenes we have there found so interesting and the friends we have there found so true.

## CHAPTER VI.

## TASMANIA.

THREE weeks of sea—three placid, uneventful weeks of blank, of rest ! Blessed are they, and grateful beyond the picturing of words, after the terrible arduous labours of our South African campaign. We have had storms and calms. We have had snow by day and frost by night. We have seen icebergs and albatrosses. We have lost ourselves in admiring, religious contemplation of the aurora, as night after night its streamers of green and purple, of scarlet and gold, have flamed across the Southern sky. For we have gone down even to regions Antarctic ; we have passed the sad, lone desolate island of Kerguelen ; we have crossed the fifty-sixth parallel of Southern latitude in pursuit of the favouring winds, which circle round the Southern pole—and now our voyage is all but ended. A fantastic and wildly picturesque landscape unfolds itself before us, upon either hand mountains piled upon mountains—some snow-capped, all forest-clothed. Inlets, estuaries, coves, and bays unnumbered fissure the indented and iron-bound coast in all directions. This is Tasmania ! Lovely land of pathetic, tragic, and historic memories ! We are gliding smoothly up the noble channel, to which the great Frenchman, D'Entrecasteaux, has given a name. Into it empties the river Derwent, at whose mouth

Hobart, the pretty capital of the Colony, is situated. Who has not heard of Tasmania? What Irishman especially? Here was it, that England, the freedom-loving, and English statesmen, the loudly philanthropic instituted and maintained a system—now, thank God, a thing of the past—darker, more loathsome, more hellish than the most unutterable abomination of Negro slavery; and of which the most refined, the most hideous of Russian devilries towards Siberian exiles would be but the feeblest of feeble imitations. Here was it, that many a hero of '98 sobbed out his brave soul, unknown, friendless, forgotten, under a burden of agony and of despair, inconceivable and indescribable. And here was it, too, that the chief of our youngest Ireland's models; our patron saint of chivalry, of high endeavour, and of higher hope; our ideal of unbending and undying defiance to foreign tyranny, of superb fidelity and devotion to Nationalistic faith—John Mitchell—drained the bitter lees of exile's cup at the cruel hands of the Carthaginian. The pilot cutter hails us. The pilot comes aboard. He brings the latest newspapers and the latest news from the Old World. We fall upon him like ravening wolves. His store is soon dispersed and distributed piecemeal. Each one falls a-reading. Gracious heavens! What do we read? Our eyes are playing pranks with us? No! Surely not! What news! Good news! Glad news!! Glorious news!!! We fling our caps into the air. We dance about the decks like madmen or mountebanks. Pigott has confessed! The *Times* is blown to its father the Devil! The Tory Government is exposed, discovered, disgraced

for ever—damned, thank, God, for all eternity !! Our fellow-passengers congratulate us heartily, and, for the most part, honestly. Our captain—a handsome, courtly, hospitable Scotchman, and, of course, a Home Ruler—smiles through his tawny beard, and, his blue eyes dancing delightedly the while, says quietly : “ I told you so.” The Lord love you, Tasmania, and hold you for aye in His safe keeping, for the tidings you have given us this day. What a triumph ! and so soon ! The purity of Irish honour proved from out the very mouths of its infamous and cowardly calumniators ! The incredible blackguardism and baseness of high-placed scoundrelism trumpeted to the ends of the earth. The cause of the dear old land secure, unscathed, and Home Rule for Ireland assured. We are changed men this morning. A brighter sun shines down upon us. Hobart seems to beckon to us coquettishly from amid her groves and gardens, while even old Mount Wellington, as he towers over her, solemn and masterful, appears to smile down upon us from under his diadem of driven snow. We land. We are immediately among friends ; each and every one proud to welcome us ; each and every one prouder, still at the resounding downfall of treachery at the final rout of all the foul fiends of perjury and forgery and of informerdom.

We spend a day or two at Hobart. Our friends escort us to New Norfolk, a pretty village situate on the Derwent, and near to the spawning-beds where myriads of little Irish trout and salmon are waiting to be turned loose into Tasmanian streams to make wealth for Tasmania’s people. But New Norfolk has

other and higher attractions for us. Here it was that William Smith O'Brien spent many a sad and dreary day of wearisome captivity. And as we find ourselves upon the spot and amid the scenes so mournfully familiar to him, we think of "this noblest of Irishmen thrust in here among the off-scourings of English jails, with his home desolated and his hopes ruined, and his defeated life falling into the sear and yellow leaf." And the rest of John Mitchell's beautiful word-picture is borne in upon our minds :—"He is a rare and noble sight to see : a man who cannot be crushed, or bowed, or broken : who can stand firm on his own feet against all the tumult and tempest of this ruffianly world, with his bold brow fronting the sun like any other Titan, son of Cœlus and Terra ; anchored immovably upon his own brave heart within." Such, in very truth, was the prisoner of New Norfolk. GOD rest his soul. He is gone to his long rest, and well nigh all the other valiant spirits who clustered round him like a galaxy of stars are gone likewise. But their memory remains with us fresh and green and sacred ; and the holy cause for which they prayed and wept by the waters of Tasmania still lives on ; and the hopes they formed for the fatherland shall yet fructify into victory, by the efforts of another generation of Irishmen who have learned the lesson taught by their purity of heart and the grandeur of their patriotic heroism.

Every visitor to Hobart goes to see Fern-tree Gully situated among the foot-hills of Mount Wellington. We went there, too, and spent a delightful day among the lovely fern-palms which hang their graceful, delicate fronds among the moss-covered rocks, and

over the purling, flashing watercourses. While all around tower those peerless monarchs of the forest, the giant blue gum trees, springing up in stately splendour to altitudes of hundreds of feet. Alas for the materialism of our age. There are slopes of Mount Wellington denuded bare, appealing to the avenging pity of high Heaven from the Vandalic fury of the woodman's axe, which has laid thousands upon thousands of these glorious blue gums low. What a pity it is, and what a disgrace, that in a district such as this, where there are acres upon acres of timber-land fit to fell—if indeed it pays to fell it—Mount Wellington of all places should be chosen for the reckless and indiscriminate destruction of the giant trees which go to constitute its idiosyncratic loveliness ! Is there no æstheticism in Hobart, and no public spirit, that the mere sordid, miserable hateful lust for gain should be permitted to rob for ever the capital and the country, too, of the unique and priceless glory of its sylvan treasure ?

Our work in Australia does not begin for another month. We wait John Dillon's arrival. So while my colleague pushes on over Bass's Straits, I take advantage of an invitation I have received to pass the interval upon a Tasmanian station. This is how the thing fell out. One of the most charming of our fellow-passengers from Cape Town was a young gentleman on his way home from Cambridge, laden with academic laurels. He and I soon discovered an identity of political sympathies. From politics we graduated to sport, where we found ourselves equally strongly of a mind. Like myself, he was an enthusiastic fisherman, though unlike me a scientific and suc-



cessful one. His brother-in-law, who met him on his arrival at Hobart, being the fortunate possessor of a well-stocked trout river, and possessing likewise an abnormal bump of hospitality, invited me—as he put it—to follow him into the wilds, which invitation I joyfully accepted. From Hobart to Brighton is a few hours' run by rail. There I left the train and took to the coach. My conductor was a typical Tasmanian—big, good-looking, kindly, a splendid whip, and an accomplished performer on the coach-horn. A noted character was my friend. Every traveller to those regions, who knows anything, knows him. He himself knew something about everybody and everything. And what, with his contagious good humour and his inexhaustible fund of racy anecdote, the time sped pleasantly by as we drove along. I found him a most ardent sympathiser with Ireland. At this I was not so very much surprised in a native of a self-governing colony. But I was surprised at the intimacy of his acquaintance with Irish affairs. He was a reader, and an extensive one, of Irish literature, and latterly the Inspector of our Irish Fisheries, when on a visit to Tasmania, had given him a book which he greatly prized, and which he had, evidently, read to some purpose—Mitchell's "Jail Journal." Our route lay through classic ground, and as we drove onwards many were the spots he pointed out, and many were the tales he told, associated with the exile of the men of '48. Such a character was my Phaeton!

From time to time, as we passed the different homesteads, he flung out the papers and letters he had for their occupants. His coach carried the mails. And

from time to time his friends along the road flung back old boots and shoes into the coach in return. I remarked this curiously at first, thinking, perchance, it might be some peculiar custom of the country. Finally my curiosity bettered my bashfulness, and I said to him :—"What the deuce do you want with these old brogues? Are you bound to a wedding?" He burst out laughing, and, handing me the reins, replied : "Take care of the coach and I'll show you." Thereupon he clambered back inside the vehicle, from whence he shortly emerged with as heterogeneous an assortment of boots as can well be imagined. Seating himself upon the box again he proceeded to cut off the uppers of the aforesaid brogues, which he threw away, retaining the soles. I grew no wiser, but waited patiently for the further developments of the situation. He next searched the pockets of a voluminous kangarooskin coat, out of which he drew a number of horse-shoe nails. Then he rummaged under our seat, and quickly unearthed a hammer and a piece of cast-iron, shod with wood, which I recognised as a duplicate of our coach-brake. Still I remained in darkness, but not for long. Placing the old soles one atop of another, he vigorously hammered them on to the brake, perfecting in a very few moments an engine of formidable appearance, and well warranted to put a full-stop to the most furious of runaways. "You see," quoth he, "in this country a man must be handy if he wants to get along." At the next stage we mounted the new brake and it worked admirably well.

From Brighton to Bothwell is a run of from thirty to thirty-five miles, through a hilly country, heavily

timbered in places. The bottoms are all cleared and cultivated ; the soil is good, the fields—or paddocks, as they are named—are divided by stiff post-and-rail fences, or by great hedges of thorn, and gorse, and sweetbriar, which give them quite a home-like appearance. The houses as a rule are built of stone, though occasionally you will meet them of wood. Tasmania is rich in building-stone—a species of freestone—which when quarried, is soft and easily cut into squares, and which hardens with exposure to the air. Taking them all round, the Tasmanians live in better built houses than other people, whether of the Old or of the New Worlds. This Brighton-Bothwell road runs right to Lake Sorell—that “ beautiful lake of the woods”—where Meagher’s cottage, the scene of many a gathering of his brother-exiles, remains to the present day. Bothwell is a collection of detached houses, lying in the centre of a fertile valley, watered by the Clyde river, and surrounded by wooded hills. Its name will be familiar to all readers of John Mitchell. At Bothwell, as he so pathetically tells us, he first found rest after his long and weary wanderings, “ sitting on the grass by a clear brawling stream, while opposite sits John Martin, sometime of Loughorne, smoking placidly and gazing curiously upon me with his mild eyes.”

Here I leave the coach and am met by my host. His station lies some twelve or fifteen miles further inland, right away among the forests and the mountains, where he promises me a taste of real bush life. He is a splendid specimen of humanity, is my friend. Over six feet high, and built in proportion ; spare and straight like an athlete in training ; a trifle bronzed

by the summer sun ; a standing advertisement of the bracing air and healthy climate of his native land. We drink to our better acquaintance in Bothwell beer—a brew somewhat improved since the days when John Knox was wont to drink of it—and away we go behind a pair of spanking ponies. We soon leave the main road and take to the bush, but if the road be rough the ponies are game, and sunset finds us at Southernfields, where our fair hostess gives us graceful welcome. Southernfields is a typical station-house. A white two-storied building, roofed with cozy-looking shingles, with a verandah running round below. Behind there stretches an innumerable number of sheds and out-houses and workshops ; stables, cattle-pens, sheep-yards, men's quarters, and all the rest. In front, at the foot of a sloping lawn, is a garden enclosed by high hedges and rich in season with the famed Tasmanian apple ; while contiguous lie the home paddocks, each from five to ten acres in extent, in which hay, corn, and other necessities for home consumption are cultivated. Beyond these, and all about the bush extends. The house stands upon a rising knoll on the side of a glen, bounded on all sides by a mountain amphitheatre, covered with primeval forest. It is a lovely spot is Southernfields, and one where a man could wish for nothing better than to settle down to live his life amid its peaceful hills and woods and waterfalls.

To describe our life in this terrestrial paradise. We rise with the lark. Breakfast discussed, if upon shooting we are bent, we saddle our horses, take our guns, and sally forth, accompanied by two or three mounted shepherds in charge of the commissariat and to bring

back the game, and followed by a nondescript pack of never-tiring dogs. We make for the forest at once; and down the ravines, round the overhanging cliffs, through the jungle our nimble steeds pick their steps safe and surefooted as goats. We reach a likely-looking glade. We form line, and on we ride, while the dogs skirmish on all sides. Presently there is a scramble and a rush. Up starts a big black kangaroo. Away he springs like a gigantic rat, increasing his pace and the length of his jumps as he goes. Bang! bang! go a couple of barrels after him; but he is over a prostrate tree and we see him no more. A couple of others are sprung by the dogs on the right. Down they come flying across our line. "Shoot ten yards ahead of them," shouts mine host. A snap shot and over the leader rolls. The second doubles under a bunch of honeysuckle trees, and is gone. Sometimes the ground is too rough for riding. We dismount, tie up our horses to the nearest convenient branch, and tackle the hill-sides on foot. Stiff walking it is, and tough as anything our Wicklow or Connemara grouse-moors have to show. Or we surround some deep gorge, into which our pack rushes headlong, and shortly there arises an echoing and re-echoing din of guns, and shouts, and yelling hounds. At noon the sun forces us to seek the shade, so we proclaim a truce, and wend our way to where a group of wattle-trees invites us to repose under their cool shadow. There the head shepherd—a very king of bushmen—has pitched the camp and prepared the feast to which we do ample justice with Tasmanian appetites. For an hour or two we smoke our pipes, and rest the dogs and listen to the wondrous

yarns of our shepherd friends, concerning gold-mining, bush-ranging, or the varied experiences of camp life in the wilds. When we have idled long enough we start shooting again, or perhaps we take a bee-tree by way of change.

Tasmanian bees make the best honey in the world. They make it high up in the boles of the gum-trees. A bee-tree is not always easy of discovery, and when discovered everybody rejoices. To get the honey is the next thing ; but it is easier said than done. First the giant tree has to be felled—a task sometimes of a couple of hours' duration. At last it crashes down like an avalanche, and everyone runs away, for the bees rush out in infuriated swarms, and woe betide the luckless wight they catch. After a while they gather in their legions, and the human foe plucks up courage enough to creep near the prostrate trunk on the windward side, setting the grass and brushwood afire in a dozen different places. A bush-fire takes like lightning, and burns with intense fury. The bee-tree is speedily enveloped in suffocating smoke, and the bees are at our mercy. Before they revive we have rifled their store. Comb, honey and all are heaped into buckets or anything else handy and carried home to be clarified. The yield of some of these bee nests is positively marvellous. One hundred and forty pounds of golden honey is not an uncommon take from a single tree.

Among Southernfield's are many attractions ; its river ranks with the highest. For miles through its mountains and cañons and under its beetling precipices the rapid, flashing, rushing Shannon foams along. This river would be the idol and ideal of a

poet, a painter, or a fisherman. Such sounds ! such scenery ! and such sport ! Many a happy day have I spent upon its banks, or wading in its shallows, while the music of its waters filled my ears as they sped along, mirroring the rocks and trees and ferns with their ever-varying background of hill and glade, and dale and cliff ; and its speckled trout leaped from the pools and eddies, gleaming like silver bars. And many a time, as stretched upon its brink as I set my tackle or sorted my basket, would I recall Mitchell's apostrophe : " Well I know the voice of this eloquent river. It talks to me and to the woods and rocks in the same tongue and dialect, wherein the Roe discoursed to me a child ; in its crystalline gush my heart and brain are bathed, and I hear in its plaintive chime all the blended voices of history, and prophecy, and of poesy from the beginning," until I could almost fancy " Knox " seated on the opposing shore " musing with dreamy eyes upon the passing waters." Alack a day ! Time flies.

We must leave Southernfields lest it become our Capua. We have work to do and work galore. But before the painful day of parting comes we have a pilgrimage to make. One sharp crisp bracing morning my host and I mount our mettlesome steeds and gallop away. Through the bush we fly and over the open downs beyond. On and on and on till we cross the mountain crest from whence we look down upon Bothwell in the Vale below. We wind to the left, and three or four miles further we draw rein at our destination. Our Mecca is Nant Cottage. In '51 it must have been a delightful place of sojourn. It is lovely

even now, though falling rapidly into decay. A low-one-storied dwelling, covered with creepers outside, and roomily disposed within, stands in a little garden now sadly neglected ; away on all sides rolls a wide verdant plain, planted like a park with occasional stately black gums and honeysuckles and wattle-trees ; while the forests and the piled-up mountains circle it round and lose themselves beyond the range of vision in the blue of the horizon. A fairer home no man could ~~court were he a free man.~~ But better no home at all and liberty, than even Nant Cottage and an English Ticket-of-leave. Yes ! One can well sympathise with Mitchel when he speaks of "Sitting placid under a honeysuckle tree, drinking in the balmy air of these meadows of Asphodel and Lotus, facing the Magellan clouds and stars unknown before." While ever and again memory's goad would sting him into bitter anathema of Ireland's tyrants, and turning anxiously to Martin, he would ask him, "What are they doing in Ireland ?" I enter the lowly dwelling with reverence and visit each room in turn, until I come to the largest of them all. There, silent and wrapt in thought, I stand by the wide hearth, now desolate, round which Mitchel and Martin, and Meagher, and O'Doherty, and Smith O'Brien, and, mayhap, even poor "Nicaragua," drew their chairs at eventide as the crackling fire-tongues licked the piled up logs, and the winter's snow beat against the window panes, and talked of home and of home friends, and asked each other, "Do they think of us in Ireland ?"

Every reader of the "Jail Journal" knows how Mitchel escaped from Bothwell. Very few know who

court



helped him to escape. Thirty-six years have rolled away since those days so pathetic, so interesting to us later-day Irishmen at Nant Cottage and by Lake Sorell. There can be no harm in solving the enigma of "J—— H——," now. For the information of my readers I give them his portrait, taken in 1853, and in regulation Bushman's garb. His name is John Howells. He is as hale and as hearty now as he was then, and as staunch as ever in his friendship for Ireland. He is a squatter, Tasmanian born, and of Welsh descent. But one more of the instances innumerable of men with no connection whatever with Ireland who, nevertheless, give practical testimony to their belief in the justice and holiness of her cause. I had the good fortune to make Mr. Howell's acquaintance, and many a hearty laugh had he and I together over his humorous recital of the incidents of John Mitchell's race for liberty upon the gallant gray.

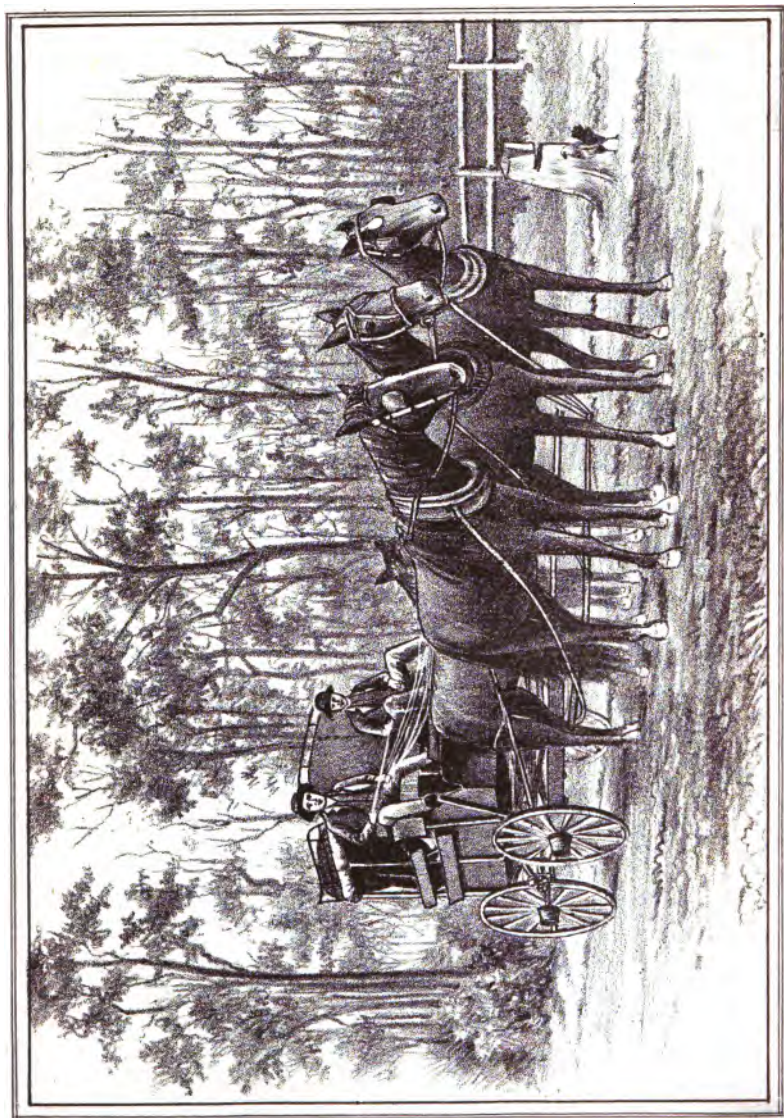
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## CHAPTER VII.

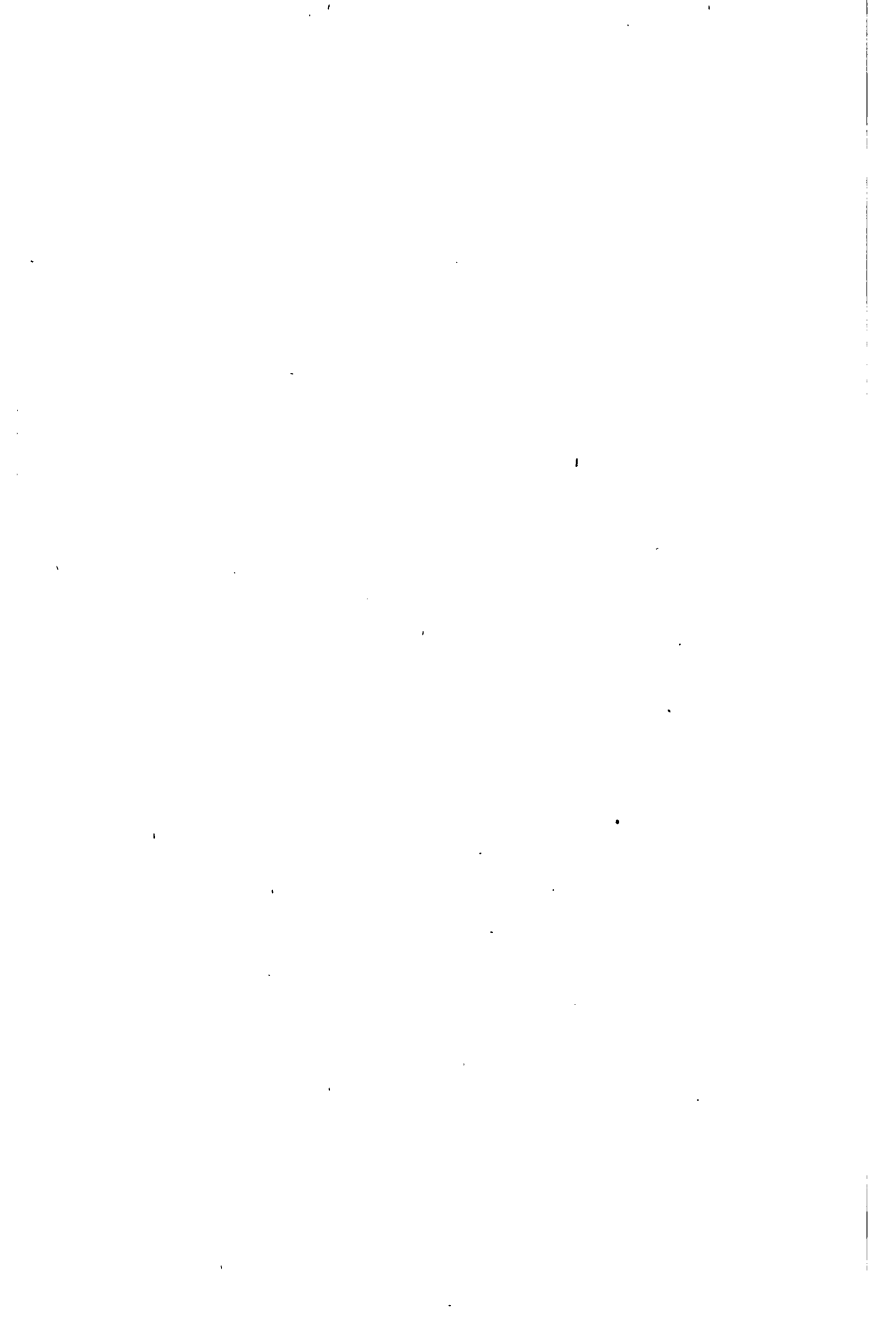
## SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

ADELAIDE, the capital of South Australia. The ball is opened. We are in harness again. John Deasy and I came last night. John Dillon is expected by the Orient boat this morning. She is timed to arrive early, so we are up at cockcrow and down by the first train to the port—two or three miles off. It is a glorious day. The sun shines brightly ; the air is clear and bracing ; and the sea-breeze sends the blood rushing through our veins. We are just in proper fettle to tackle the Australian gold-fields, and to gather the golden harvest they promise for the people at home. We spend an hour upon the jetty that runs out into the bay, watching and chatting with the juvenile fishermen, who are doing their level best to tempt the passing mullet and garfish to hook themselves on to the ends of their long lines. "She is in sight," shouts one of our party, from the extremity of the pier. We join him quickly, and far away on the very verge of the horizon we discern a faint wreath of smoke. An hour or so later and the iron leviathan brings to at anchor a couple of miles from the shore. A boat puts us on deck in due course. We have come down on the sly to have the first word with the member for Mayo before the formal reception, which takes place at noon. We soon find him.

There isn't much trouble about that, for, though there are many passengers on the quarter deck, there are not many John Dillons among them. We are soon shaking him by the hand and looking into his pale, thoughtful face. And how is he? What sort of a journey has he had? Does he feel anyway hearty? Such, and many such queries we anxiously put to him. He says he feels fairly well; that the voyage has been a pleasant one, and has done him good. But there is room enough for improvement still, God knows. There is a langour in his movements; there is a sad air of delicacy and fragility about him; and the cruel marks of Bomba Balfour's tortures show but too plainly on his pallid cheeks. A nice Government, truly, this Government of Ireland, which promotes Irish policemen for their valour in murdering their fellow-countrymen, and sends the noblest and purest and best of Ireland's sons to herd with felons for the crime of patriotism. "The devil fly away with the governors of Ireland! Of course, he will some day, but he is a long time about it, bad luck to him." Such are our thoughts, and such our prayers, as we shake John Dillon's hand and note with pain how weak and ill he looks. But we have a regular catechism through which to put him. "How is the Chief?" "What news of Wm. O'Brien?" "How are they all at Luggacurren and at Woodford and at Coolgreany?" "How fares the fight at home?" He has nothing but good news for us. All goes well. There is plenty of hope, and plenty of determination in Ireland. Coercion hasn't taken a feather out of them. "More power to the men in the gap!"



COACHING IN AUSTRALIA



John Dillon has travelled out in quite a select company. The new Governor of South Australia and all his suite are in the ship. They are to make their state entry into Adelaide to-day. Hence it is that the big Liner is gay with bunting; and this explains the antics of a rakish-looking gunboat that is going about torturing our ears with the sharp reports of her venomous artillery, as if her very existence depended on her capability of raising a din. But without the bunting and without the salutes, we have enough to show that there are some very high and mighty passengers on board. The suite are on the war-path, and gorgeous in many-coloured raiment. One gallant warrior in particular claims my undivided admiration. He wears a brass helmet, as big as a coal-scuttle, with a whole horse's tail stuck in the top of it. He has a glittering collar, up to his ears, and so stiff he can't turn his head for it. His uniform blazes with gold braid, and gold buttons, and gold straps, and gold chains. He carries a gold mine upon his back. Gilt spurs, six inches long, sprout from his booted heels, while a sabre—big as Finn Macoul's—drags behind him along the deck with a martial clatter, much to his evident delight, and much to the evident discomfiture of several unfortunates, whose corns and whose equanimity it ruthlessly attacks.

The hour is come for us to go ashore. Two steamboats are alongside. The one flying the Union Jack, and manned by a decorous company of gentlemen in tall hats and frock coats; the other carries the green flag of old Ireland. It has a band on board, and its decks are packed with enthusiastic men, who make

the welkin ring during the intervals of "God Save Ireland," and of "The Wearing of the Green," with cheers for "Dillon," for "O'Brien," and for "Home Rule." A striking contrast are the vessels, and typical of our changing times: Monarchy and Democracy; the old order and the new; the ancient systems and the ancient schools of thought, already well advanced in their decline, and the younger and healthier ones rapidly, if imperceptibly, taking their places, are there represented for him who cares to decipher the handwriting of evolution. The Governor and his escort depart first with due solemnity for the shore, while the gunboat circles round them firing off its cannon as they go. We follow soon after in the strict etiquette of historical and chronological precedence.

Arrived at the port, we are received by the Mayor and his fellow-Mayor of the neighbouring township. Addresses are read, and then we drive slowly through the streets all but impassable from the cheering multitude to the railway for Adelaide. When we reach the city there is a repetition of a similar scene, but upon a larger scale. We are escorted to our hotel, where from the balcony we reply to more addresses. But for the semi-tropical sun and the absence of policemen, we could fancy ourselves at home in Ireland, so enormous and so enthusiastic is the assembled audience. Our embassy to Australia is well begun. Next day we devote to Adelaide and its surroundings. The city is one of the fairest of all Australia. A horseshoe of mountains studded with vineyards and orchards confine it on three sides. The fourth is bounded by

the sea. The city forms a square checkered with green open spaces, and intersected by broad handsome streets set at right angles. All round outside runs a belted park, dividing Adelaide proper from its suburbs, where different manufacturing industries are carried on. No factory chimney, no factory smoke is to be found within that fairy ring of green. The Botanical Gardens are about the finest in Australasia. Our hotel fronts them. They are, in very truth, a thing of marvellous beauty, and not without a certain likeness to those at Naples. Shrubs and forest trees, flowers and creepers, statuary, fountains, water—nothing is lacking there to charm the eye and to invite to the full enjoyment of the beautiful.

Next night we hold our meeting. How shall I describe it? The most spacious hall in Adelaide is unequal to the accommodation of all who want to come. The Archbishop, a noble-looking man, and whose heart does not belie his looks, is on the platform in his purple robes. There are members there of both Houses of the South Australian Legislature ; judges, magistrates, leading citizens of every nationality and of every religion are there likewise. The vast assemblage, which occupies every inch of available space within the building, is as variously composed, though the greater portion of our auditors naturally are our kinsfolk. The audience has in it all that is truest and most sterling and most devoted of Irish blood in South Australia. Men, ay, and women, have travelled down hundreds of miles from the interior, utterly regardless of distance, of discomfort, and of sacrifice to see John Dillon, and to show their loyalty to the old



land and to the old cause. Their hearts are still in Ireland. They never can forget the cloud-kissed cradle of their race ; no matter how well things go with them—no matter how fortunate, how prosperous they become in the great, free land of the “Golden Fleece,” green Erin is ever in their minds and on their lips and in their prayers. And now their very souls are wrung, and the very walls around us rock to the reverberation of the rapture, the phrenzy of deafening welcome, with which they salute the hero of a hundreds fights—Balfour’s dauntless criminal—as John Dillon rises to plead for Ireland.

The following day our triumvirate separates. Mr. Dillon starts for Tasmania. We remain behind to explore South Australia, through which we shape different courses, for we have a dozen different meetings to do in as many days. My readers will please to follow me up Northward and Eastward, touching at different towns, rejoicing, some of them, in the melodious native names of Burra-Burra and Terowie and Orroroo ; and others in the less musical and more commonplace designations of Hindmarsh and Petersburg and Silverton to Broken Hill over the border in New South Wales. Travelling in pen and ink is easy enough ; but in practice your Orroroos and Silvertons are not readily get-at-able. For we have brought to South Australia a sample of our Irish weather. There has been no rain in the colony for goodness knows how long. There has been no growth, no green, no grass. Nothing for months and months but dust and drought and universal burnt, baked brownness. The farmers are in despair, and everybody

else as well. Suddenly the floodgates of the heavens are loosed, and down comes the rain. Down it comes with a vengeance. No bad imitation in truth of an African deluge : and for a full week or so Ovid's moist friend, Notus, hovers over the land, sending life to corn and fruit and cattle from every pore of his dripping wings.

This reads poetically ; but there is little poesy in it for a poor devil of an agitator with half a score of meetings to attend. The grass grows, and the trees blossom, and the cattle fatten with the rain, and the farmers throw up their hats. But with the rain the creeks fill and swell, and grow into rivers, and leave their beds and spread out over the country. Every acre of low lying ground is flooded. The roads are made impassable. The railway tracks are washed away ; and for the time being all regular methods of communication find their utility ended. An octavo volume would not contain the recital of our many shifts and schemes and dodges for getting along. Travelling in freight waggons and on pioneer engines, going around twenty miles to advance four ; paddling about in swamps and through bogs in which our buggies sink axle-deep ; while the rain comes down with a dogged pertinacity fit to make one doubt of the promise of the rainbow. These things are synonymous with Australian travel in wet seasons.

On one occasion I had an eighty miles drive to catch a train early next morning, which was to carry me to a meeting the same night. We left Millicent, in South Australia, where we had held a meeting the night before, at seven a.m., in pouring rain, and drove on by

Mount Gambier to the Victorian border. Some distance over the border in a wild forest region, tenanted mainly by Kangaroos, we came to a lake, a good half mile wide, through the middle of which the road had used to run. It was not an inviting prospect. There was not a human being within ten miles of us if we broke down ; but there was nothing for it but to go in. So in we went. The water was soon washing over our feet, not that we minded it much, for we could not be more thoroughly soaked than we already were ; but in the very middle of the lagoon—horror of horrors ! we stuck in the treacherous mud. How we got out I don't know. I don't believe that even the horses knew. I only know that we did get out. My driver was an artist, and ten miles further on we knocked at the door of a Wexford man, who gave us a characteristic welcome, and sent us on our way very much the better for a warm meal, dry wraps, and his good wife's blessing. Between swimming and wading we made Casterton by seven that evening, where the dismal recollections of my drive were speedily dispelled by the glowing fire of its hospitable presbytery.

On another occasion it was necessary to get from one small country town to another distant about forty miles. The entire district was inundated. On reaching the station in the morning we were greeted with the announcement that a wash-out was rumoured on the railway about midway. There was, however, no absolute certainty about the wash-out, so we determined to chance it rather than disappoint our friends at the other end, who had arranged a meeting for that night. The stationmaster—a sympathiser with the cause—

seconded us manfully. No train had come up ; the line was cut below. But he had an engine on a switch and a goods waggon, which he placed at our disposal. The train was provisioned, and off we started. We had not gone far when we entered a broad valley, which at that moment was neither more nor less than a turbid inland sea. The iron track was nowhere to be seen. It had disappeared under the muddy waves. Our driver, however, knew the road, and said he thought it was all right. There were no culverts (a culvert is a water-way under the line) for a bit. There was only one bad one on the whole run ; and he calculated he could get that far anyway. So we took to the water. On we crawled at a snail's pace, not knowing how soon we might find ourselves off the metals. The Tiberian flood rose higher and higher as we sank deeper and deeper into it. "Take care you don't get put out," we would shout forward to the engine. "All right ! Never you fear," would come back the confident rejoinder. And on and on we waded, while the rain came streaming down.

A most extraordinary sensation this : being dragged along through the swirling water. All the usual landmarks were absolutely obliterated. No fences, no dwellings were to be seen, except where here and there on more elevated spots a fragment of post and rail, or, at rarer intervals, the shingle roof of a farmhouse, poked up their heads with woebegone looks, evidently much out of their element. The only things that seemed at all happy were the gum-trees. They rose green and glistening from the deluge, speckling its dark bosom like an irregular crop of brobdignagian

cabbages. We soon wearied of the monotony of the landscape—all the more speedily, perhaps, that our point of viewing it was none of the most comfortable. But we found solace, and abundance of it, in the lunch (with which our escort came well provided), in tobacco, and in forty-five—three unfailing recipes for killing time. Everybody—including the Agitator—was in high spirits, barring one of the company. He insisted on grumbling, and refused to be comforted. “What was the matter with him?” He anathematised the rain. “Everyone else blessed the rain. Why didn’t he?” “Why, sir?” “Because my—rabbits, bless them, were dying of hunger before this—, —, rain came on, and now they’ll be worse than ever—, —, —.” Verily, the clerk of the weather office must find it no easy job to please his customers! His is no sinecure!

As we neared the dangerous culvert, where the wash-out was thought to have taken place, we were all on the *qui vive*, and, truth to tell, questions were now and then put—quite innocently, of course—as to how deep the water might be on either side of the line? and whether there was anybody not yet drowned out in the neighbourhood who could give a man a shake down for a night? All of a sudden we came to a dead stop. “Well, Bill, what do you think of her?” “Begor, I don’t rightly know,” comes back from the conductor. “There’s a quare curl on the water, and it’s fifteen feet to the bottom, me boys!” We hold a council of war. It is finally determined that two or three shall wade across on the centre of the track. It is no child’s play, but we have some good swimmers

of the party and they volunteer. The rest of us look on with intense excitement as they struggle over hand in hand. They cross and return in safety, and report we may venture. We do so blithely, though there is just a little flutter of nervousness as we hear the hollow sound of the wheels on the culvert timbers, and reflect that it is fifteen feet to the bottom of the brown torrent which eddies round, and all but into our waggon as we cross. When we reach our destination, we are heroes each and every one. And whether it be due to the rain or to our adventure, an audience of twenty or thirty farmers gives us at least a gold sovereign a man for their evicted brethren in Ireland. Ours is the last train to cross that culvert for a week.

At Broken Hill—when we got there—we have a great meeting of miners, Irish, English, Scotch, Welsh, American, Canadian, presided over by their English Mayor. This city is very similar to Johannesburg, though upon a smaller scale. It has a population of some ten thousand souls, the object of whose existence is to dig up and melt down a hill of silver, very jagged and very picturesque, and rapidly decreasing in size, which juts up beside the town. It stands in the centre of a wild desolate region which, before the discovery of its silver treasure, was inhabited only by nomadic shepherds. There is good sport to be had there in the season with the wild turkey—a species of bustard—and occasionally one is given the unexpected spectacle of a troupe of camels stalking over the sage brush, laden with merchandise, in charge of drivers from Asia all the way.

From Broken Hill to Mount Gambier 'tis a far cry.

Mount Gambier lies at the south-eastern extremity of South Australia, in the centre of one of the richest agricultural districts, for its size, in the world. It has a pack of fox-hounds, as has Adelaide, and, from the master down, the straightgoers of the hunt are always glad to welcome a sporting stranger, and to do the hospitable by him in thorough Australian style. The town itself is pretty and quaint. It clusters round the feet of a number of extinct volcanoes, whose craters have long forsworn their evil habits, and are now deep, placid lakes. The Blue Lake in the main crater is one of the sights of Australia. A gigantic bowl, whose green, grass-grown sides fall sharply down two or three hundred feet, to where the unfathomable waters mirror the blue of the heavens and throw it back with an effect of unearthly beauty. Close by a spot is shown and made memorable by his monument, where Allen Lindsay Gordon—the Australian poet—leaped his horse from the road over a huge rail fence on to the brink of the precipice and back again ; a feat of horsemanship more pleasing to read of or describe than to imitate.

At Mount Gambier we have another most successful meeting, under the presidency of its English Mayor. And in concluding this chapter upon South Australia, it may, perhaps, be worth the placing of this fact upon record—viz., that at every one of the nine or ten meetings I addressed in the country districts of the Colony the chair was taken by the Mayor or leading magistrate, who in no instance was an Irishman. Yet we are told that the Australians, other than of Irish blood, do not sympathise with Ireland.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## MELBOURNE.

"MARVELLOUS MELBOURNE!" a city of palaces! forty years old, and with four hundred thousand citizens! one of the most famous examples of that extraordinary activity, that incredible virility of progress, the distinguishing stamp of these new worlds. Melbourne's compeers throughout the universe may be numbered on the fingers of one hand. Of her own age and generation she has but two rivals—Chicago and San Francisco. After all, weak as man may be, and puny as may be his efforts, he has some reason for legitimate pride in himself and in his doings, when he can point to a prodigy such as the 'capital of Victoria, risen, as by enchantment, in the span of a lifetime from the mud flats by the sluggish Yarra's banks; possessed of wealth and commerce positively fabulous; methods of communication and contingent modern conveniences superior to those of London; public and private buildings on a scale of American magnificence, among them a cathedral erected by Australian Irishmen, one of the finest Catholic ecclesiastical edifices of modern date in existence.

Home Rule for Ireland was *anathema maranatha* in Melbourne we were warned. What happened when we got there? Thousands of Irishmen and women thronged the streets. No sooner did John Dillon



appear outside the railway station than—a cheer is not the word—a thunderclap of welcome arose, fit to wake the dead, and spread like a prairie fire, and rolled around and around, and was caught up and re-echoed again and again along the way to the Hibernian Hall, where thousands were turned away for lack of room at the public reception of the Irish ambassadors. These Irish Victorians are a wonderful body of men! When some ten years ago Messrs. John and William Redmond visited Australia upon a mission similar to ours, they were forbidden to speak in Melbourne. They could not even obtain a hall in which to state the case of their infamously libelled countrymen. The Victorian Irish vowed they would build a hall of their own in consequence, and they built it; one of the finest, most substantial, most commodious public halls, to be found anywhere, with a seating capacity of four thousand. In the Hibernian Hall we fitly inaugurated our Victorian campaign. I may here be permitted a remark on the opposition we met with in Melbourne.

There are two great newspapers in that city---*The Age* and *The Argus*. They are better gotten up and more capably directed than any newspaper in the United Kingdom. They are, and have always been, our bitterest and most deadly haters. On the Irish question they out-Herod even the London *Times*; and on that question—like their English contemporary—they are the most accomplished, inveterate, unblushing, and unmitigated liars both. *The Argus* is not so bad. It lies, and lies sturdily. But it rejoices in the ghost of a conscience; and it

will occasionally, and when it suits it, publish a rejoinder to its lying. The *Age* lies hot and strong, and broad and deep, and insinuates and misrepresents, and suppresses and falsifies, and generally does the devil's work all round unceasingly. And while its columns teem perpetually with the foulest, the most atrocious, the most inconceivable abuse of Ireland and of her representatives, those same columns are ever hermetically sealed to every and any attempt in vindication or in reply. There is nothing bad enough, nothing mean enough, nothing too dishonourable, too sordid, too base, either for the objects, the methods, or the *personnel* of those who seek to obtain for Ireland the liberty Victoria enjoys, and for the race they champion, from the *Age*. This was our experience of the Larrikin of Australian journalism. We succeeded in spite of its opposition. The more bitterly we were attacked, and the more villainously abused, the more generously and the more bravely did our friends rally to our support—and generosity equal to theirs I have never witnessed, unless it was in New Zealand.

Shortly after our arrival in Melbourne we held our meeting. We held it in the Hibernian Hall, though we could have held it elsewhere, for the very reasons of its being and for its associations. Our chairman was an ex-Premier of Victoria—an Irishman by birth and sentiment, and bearing an honoured Irish name; our platform was thronged with members of the Victorian Legislature, several of whom spoke for us manfully during the evening. Our countryman, the kindly and hospitable archbishop, headed the list with a princely donation to our fund; while the ovation

JOHN DILLON received from the thousands who squeezed themselves in to hear him through windows as well as doors is beyond the recording of this pen of mine. There was an overflow meeting in the street outside, and fourteen hundred pounds was the result of our cry for help to the evicted Irish tenants—conclusive proof of the unpopularity of their cause in Victoria's capital.

A day or two later and we have a bumper meeting at Ballarat. Ballarat, whose name rings metallic in our ears! and is associated in our minds with legends of diggers and diggings, of dumper and billy can, of gold dust and gold nuggets, of fabulous fortunes accidentally made by dwellers in canvas huts, of wild life, wild frolic, and wild tragedy! The Ballarat of to-day is a beautiful city, boasting of fine parks, broad streets, and splendid buildings. It is built over the old gold mines, in the centre of a rich farming country. The system of agriculture there carried on comes as near perfection as possible. Such neat farms! And so beautifully worked! The very latest and most approved of agricultural machinery. The very best strains of horses and cattle and sheep that can be obtained. The soil tilled and fertilised so that it blooms like a garden; and, signs on it, these farmers thrive. They produce everything we produce at home, corn and beef, pigs and potatoes, and many things, such as cheese, which we should produce at home, but which we don't. Thanks to the courtesy of a friend—about the most popular man in Ballarat, an Irishman, and known all over Victoria as G. G.—I visited, among others, the farm of the prize farmer of the

CLARKE Estate, another Irishman by the way. He kept his house in everything from bread and bacon to cheese and candles. His dairy was a sight to see, and his butter commanded the top price in the City Market.

Ballarat is one of the sporting centres of Victoria. Racing, coursing, hunting flourish there with true Australian vigour. The Hunt Club is one of the institutions of the place. Long may it live and prosper! Many a delightful day have I had with those hounds, thanks to the hospitable kindness of my sporting friends. As horsemen the Australians are not to be beat. Their horses are as good as good can be. They must needs be good, and extra good, to do the things they do in a country so stiff as theirs. It is nothing like what we have in Ireland. There are no fences like ours in Australia; no hedges; no ditches; no stone walls. There is first the universal split rail fence; a stern, unbending obstacle, from three and a-half feet upwards in height. It is constructed of sturdy posts, sunk deep into the ground, at intervals of six or seven feet, with three or four rails, three or four inches by one and a-half, morticed into them. Then there is the log-fence, made of the trunks of trees laid one atop of another. There is then the dead-wood fence, formed of huge roots and branches of trees piled together: and finally the wire fence, occasionally of barbed wire. There is no "give" in these Australian fences. You must go over them or you go down, and no mistake about it either.

I well remember my first day with the Ballarat hounds. It was my first day's hunting in Australia. There was a goodly muster at the meet, red coats

galore, and ladies, too—they can ride, can the Australian ladies. We went away, my horse, a big black, and a good fencer, pulling like a steam engine. Our first jump was on the crest of a gentle rise. The ground sloped away on the other side. What was it, think you? A wire paling some four feet high, with a single wooden slab laid along the top! Here was a nice introduction to Australian jumping! I'm not ashamed to admit it, my heart went down to somewhere about the toes of my boots. "They're not going at this thing, surely!" I said to myself. But, faith, they were! For as I glanced round I saw every man and woman of the field going for it like a whirlwind. "Marry come up!" said I to myself again. "'Twill never do to disgrace the old country. The 'Lawyer' knows his business, I suppose, so here goes for old Ireland!" The "Lawyer" knew his business well. There was not a stop, a swerve, or a falter. A bare shortening of his stride at the take-off, a rush through the air, and the genial M. F. H. and I were exchanging compliments as we sailed along stirrup by stirrup in the adjoining paddock.

Ballarat's greatest attraction centres in the fact of its having been the cradle of Victorian Liberty. The 3rd of December, 1854, is a never-to-be-forgotten day in the Victorian calendar. On that day, at the Eureka stockade, the Ballarat diggers, under the command of Peter Lalor, fought for their rights, and won them. We visited the historic spot, now crowned with a noble monument, on which the old wooden fort was erected. We also visited the graveyard, where the heroic dead of that memorable day sleep their last long sleep.

And in both places my Irish heart swelled within me as I noticed that the leader of the patriots was an Irishman, and the majority of those who sealed their patriotism with their blood, were Irishmen too.

Among the defenders of the Eureka was one—James Esmonde—a county Wexford man. He was the founder of the fortune, the prosperity, the greatness of Victoria. He discovered the first gold in the colony at Clunes, not very far from Ballarat. I made his acquaintance shortly after my visit there, and learned from him many things of interest, of those early days. His was a curious and chequered career. He left Ireland as a boy for Port Philip—as Melbourne was then called. He first found work driving a coach, and made money at the work. Then came the gold rush to California. He threw himself into the stream. In California he was unsuccessful, but while there he was struck with the similarity of the gold-bearing rock to that he had noticed in the district where Ballarat now stands. He made up his mind that there must be gold there, too, so he returned to look for it. He succeeded in his search. Its sequel is Australian history. His discovery determined the destinies of Australasia. Like many another of those old digger pioneers, Esmonde did not grow rich, though he enriched countless others. He lives now in very straitened circumstances. Surely there should be a sufficient sense of public indebtedness towards him to urge the Victorian Government to grant at least a modest pension in his declining years to the man who made Victoria.

Our meeting at Sandhurst—the other great Victorian

gold-mining centre, was marked by the most pathetic incident of our tour. The chair was taken by the whole-souled and saintly bishop. He is an Irishman to the heart's core—as keen a follower of the varying fortunes of our stirring times, and as interested in every incident of our struggle for National right and National existence as he was when years ago he bade adieu to his native sod. For years he directed the intricate affairs of his vast diocese with a skilful hand, when a terrible and crushing blow fell upon him. He was overtaken by the most fearful material loss that can befall an intelligent and cultured man. He lost his sight. Blind as he was he insisted upon acting as our chairman. It was a noble and a touching sight to see this grand old patriarch led on to the platform, his white hair silver-gleaming; his kind face cast in those sad and solemn lines drawn by long suffering, bravely and uncomplainingly borne; his sightless orbs fixed, as if gazing entranced on scenes above our grosser ken, as if looking beyond our world into the future—already partly his—wherein he read what we could not, and contemplated visions we were not given to see. There was not a tearless eye in that densely crowded hall as he was led to the presiding chair. There were many filled with tears to overflowing when he arose like an old time-seer and spoke as his great heart taught him of his country and his people far away; and lamented over their bitter trials and blessed them for their constant faith and constant patriotism; and, in prophetic tones, foretold that the day was nigh at hand when the LORD would lead them into the promised land of liberty and peace.

Never shall I forget the impression wrought upon me by this holy and venerable priest, so calmly resigned under his unspeakable affliction : so nobly brave in his advocacy of the claims of his sore-stricken country and so eloquent in championing a cause, which should be a high and a holy cause were it no more than blessed by the prayers of such men as he.

At Sandhurst my colleagues visited its famous mines. For my part I like not mines. I have never yet been down a mine. We must all go beneath the ground some day ; and too soon that day comes to each and all of us. I must go there then, but I'll go no sooner 'an I can help it. I love the fresh clear air, the blue sky, the green waving grass, the rustling trees, the sweet smelling flowers, the sounds of singing birds, and the gladsome buzz of the myriad live and happy things that glance around in the genial sunshine. So I stayed above, and while like gnomes they groped amid the murky bowels of old Mother Earth, I hied me to a vineyard near the city kept by a French Vignerons—a courteous man, as are all Frenchmen, who entertained me with his home-brewed clarets, and Rabelais and Boulanger. These Australian wines are delicious. They want only age to make them perfect, and advertisement to spread the knowledge of them. As it is, much of our so-called French wine is but a bad decoction of Australia's generous grape. One of these days the Australians will grow wine for the world.

Yes! Australia is a glorious country—free, healthy abundantly blessed by Providence, and with an unbounded future. The more one sees of Australia the more one likes it. Truly, it is a marvellous land ;



as yet it is but at the beginning of its development, but 'tis a country where anybody who means to work has a better chance of success than in any other I have visited, not even excepting the United States. An industrious man there is bound to get on. The climate is good, and it is fairly easy to get hold of a bit of land. In Victoria land may be bought up to six hundred and forty acres from the Government at one pound per acre, with twenty years in which to pay the purchase money.

Of course, one has to rough it somewhat, but the roughing comes relatively easy where there is no cold worth mentioning, and everywhere plenty of cheap food. Australia is the working man's paradise. It has there manhood suffrage, eight hours' work, and plenty of work to do. Household servants command their own terms. But for the mere "educated man," as he is termed, without billet ready for him Australia is not the place unless he wants to starve. I remember meeting a poor fellow—a countryman—splendidly book-learned who could quote Horace by the yard. As a quill-driver he could get nothing to do. Some time later he wrote to me that having applied to a labour office—an institution we should have at home—he had found work as a farm labourer at a salary of a pound a week.

The more one sees of the Australians, too, the more one likes them. They are essentially manly, open-hearted, and hospitable. They are enthusiastic sportsmen. Young Australia is a nation of sportsmen. There is hardly a village without its coursing club; no town is without its race meeting, no city without its hunt

club. And I don't believe that anything short of a deluge or an earthquake would keep an Australian away from an Emu or a Kangaroo hunt when he can make the least excuse for one. In the course of my mission when up in the back blocks I made a new departure in Irish agitation. Instead of driving in the conventional coach I did most of my travelling on horseback. This mode of progression took the fancy of my friends immensely, and suited them to a T. Many a time have we set out, a mounted party, varying from ten to fifty, and made our way through the bush to the next place of meeting in most jocund style, shortening the road on any pretext by a helter-skelter dash over the log and brush fences along the way.

One day we had arranged an open-air meeting in a rich district, peopled mainly by Irish farmers. We rode off, some thirty or forty of us, and went along our seventeen or eighteen miles in the usual fashion. When about half a mile away, our trysting place was pointed out on the crest of a gentle eminence, where we could see the carts and buggies of our expectant audience already clustered together. Some daring spirit suggested a short-cut, and off we started, with no further praying. Of course the envoy had the best horse, and naturally was not the last at the post; and whether it was that the crops promised well, or that the mode of his arrival was so thoroughly Irish, these assembled farmers gave him just double what anybody had prophesied for the Irish National war-chest. When next an Irish envoy visits the Land of the Golden Fleece, if he will take my word for it, there

are quite as many converts to Home Rule to be made among Young Australia by riding over fences as by making speeches—if not more.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### GREAT RECEPTION AT SYDNEY.

IF ever a welcome was given to men, it was given to John Dillon and his colleagues on their arrival at Sydney. The like of it probably was never seen in Australia. A surging sea of humanity spread through the streets. All traffic was suspended. It was with difficulty that even the envoys' carriages could slowly forge their way through the vast concourse of human beings gathered together by the magnet of love for the country they represented. It was a sight ever to be remembered that ocean of human faces, whose ardour in Ireland's behalf spoke as eloquently through their straining eyes, as through their thund'rous acclamations as the human billows rocked and swayed and trembled to the reverberation of one huge volume of sound. We have read of triumphs given of old to Roman Emperors. No grander triumph surely than the one given John Dillon that day was ever given. The Sydney newspapers estimated the number of welcomers at sixty thousand souls. There was no compulsion there, no call of fashion, no rulers'

mandate. If compulsion there was or mandate or call, it came from the heart of each and every man and woman there. It was a genuine, spontaneous, democratic, testimony to the outpourings of men's souls in simple tribute to a man whom they revered; in profound and holy reverence of a cause he symbolised, and which they loved dearer than life itself. Never have I seen anything to surpass this grand rally of the Irishmen of Sydney. Adelaide greeted us warmly. Melbourne gave us a marvellous reception; but Sydney's greeting left all others in the shade. As it was with our incoming, so it was with our meeting afterwards. The capital of New South Wales had always held a high position in Ireland's estimation for open-handed generosity. At John Dillon's meeting she eclipsed her previous record, and the record of every other Irish-loving city elsewhere likewise. Some two thousand four hundred pounds were given or promised in the hall.

Sydney is assuredly the most beautiful of Australian cities. She is one of the most beautiful upon the face of the earth. She is, as it were, a selection, a bouquet, of scenic beauties. She has bits that recall to the traveller's eye the traits of Lisbon, of Naples, of San Francisco, of New Orleans. My appreciation of Sydney is all the more sincere that I went there to curse. I had heard so much of Sydney, I had read so much of Sydney, that my mind was fully made up beforehand to find fault. But there was no finding fault when the test to my resolutions came. Briefly then: when I saw Sydney Harbour I fell down and worshipped. It is one of the most superb pieces

of scenery upon which my glad eyes ever rested. Imagine a vast lake, with ramifications in all directions, winding among numberless small hills, covered with trees to the water's brink, with a sky of turquoise above and a sea of sapphire below, in which the fleecy clouds and the green, velvety shores, with the white houses nestling along them, are mirrored. Or imagine a series of small Killarneys, or of small Glengariffs—without, however, the towering, misty mountains, with their lights and shades, which make these Irish fairylands so ethereally beautiful—joined together under a stronger sun, and with a somewhat more sturdy colouring, and you have Sydney Harbour. Of its kind I know of nothing fairer saving the peerless harbour of Vavau. There are many points of interest in the city proper in the shape of public buildings, gardens, museums, libraries. The picture gallery is well worth visiting. Its contents are well selected, numerous, and judiciously arranged. One of the prettiest pictures there is by the hand of C. WATKINS, R.A., a vivid rendering of a winter scene among the Magillicuddy Reeks.

I confess to a special weakness for Sydney. She is associated in my memory with one of the most delightful of my Australian experiences. It was with the Sydney hounds. Through the kindness of one of my Sydney friends I was lent a horse one day. Such a horse! He has since visited me more than once in my dreams, Cracker was his name. He was a dark black bay, over sixteen hands to the shoulder-peak: with the shapely head, the large kind eye, the wide, red nostril, and the glossy skin that bespeaks

the pure blood, the high spirit, and the stout heart. There is many a red deer upon our Irish hills that could learn a lesson in leaping from Cracker, who, when he shook himself and stretched his shapely limbs in his long, graceful, easy canter would leave many a good horse galloping "standing still." Well, the meet was at Parramatta, the ancient capital of New South Wales. There was a big field. We went away. The scent was hot, so was the place. But Cracker didn't care. The fences were of the usual sort—log, brush, post and rail—some high, some low, some stiff, some easy. Up hill and down dale we went; now through a muddy bottom, now up a grassy rise, now through clumps of bush more or less thickly timbered and strewn with stumps and fallen trees. Cracker cantered along, taking his jumps as they came, with never a touch nor a trip nor a swerve, treading his way through the timber, picking his steps in the swamps with all the calm and all the dexterity of an old stager, and his years were only five. On we went. The field began to thin. Some left us; some "got left" themselves. The pace was too much for some. But Cracker didn't care. For a good five miles we ran without a break; then came a check.

We welcomed it. Some of us dismounted, and our horses breathed the easier. Others helped themselves to the flasks as they were handed round, while the hounds cast about. Suddenly they were off again. We were clustered together on a road. The pack took up the running in the paddock alongside. It was a broad, smooth prairie, sloping gently away to where in the distance it was bounded by a belt of

woodland. Away raced the hounds, throwing out their music as they went, their mottled backs and sides picked out upon the green. There was no time to lose if we meant to be with them. But an awful difficulty frowned in the way. The road was bounded by a "Government" fence, a huge three-barred post, and rail, with uprights sunk deep down into the soil, and joined together by great beams that a canon ball would hardly rend asunder. It was a sight to take one's breath away, and we had to get over it if we wished to see the run. My host—whose Irish blood scorned to stop at anything—wheeled his charger at the fence and went for it with a shout. There was a blood-curdling sound of banging hoofs on the top bar, but, "By jingo, he's over all right!" The whip goes next with bloody spur, and leaves enough hair behind to fill a dozen lockets, but on he goes.

"Now, Cracker, it's our turn." Cracker turns his docile head. We pick a panel with a grassy take-off, and canter up slanting-wise. No spur is needed. A gentle pressure of the knee and foot, and "Heavens! what a spring!" There is no sound of ringing wood, no sensation of checking in mid-air, but a lusty thrill of pride and joy flies through my veins, and I'll bet through Cracker's, too, as we sweep along in the wake of the fleeting hounds, while the soft airs bathe us, and we feel as if in an enchanted dream, steeped in that wild exhilarating passionate delirium of delight, which comes to us, as a foretaste of an Indian paradise, sometimes, but rarely, and only when borne along upon a noble, generous, swiftly flying steed. Who crossed that fence afterwards I know not, nor how

they crossed it. I only know that the rest of that hunt was an age of bliss ; one of those Elysian cycles when the hour glass does not run, and we taste the joys of an hundred lives in an ecstatic trance in which time and space—the present, the past, and the future—everything but the delight of living, is forgotten. This, too, I know, that when the hunt was over, and we were congratulating each other on the run of the season, of the staunch horses that had gone through it, Cracker was the only one without a fall.

New South Wales is a wonderful colony. Like all its sisters it suffers now and then from droughts and floods. But such is the vitality of its natural resources, that its prosperity soon recovers from such temporary checks. Its land laws differ somewhat from the Victorian. You buy land from the Government, according to locality, in blocks of six hundred and forty, twelve hundred and fifty, and two thousand five hundred acres, at one pound sterling per acre. You pay two shillings per acre on allotment, and four per cent. annually on the balance of the purchase-money so long as it remains unpaid. This is usually for ever. From nine to ten per cent. interest is to be got for invested capital, enough to pay the state charge and leaving the investor the difference. The soil is of great fertility. No doubt, in places the want of water is a serious drawback ; but this in time will yield to irrigation, and to the artesian well. The best portion of New South Wales is, perhaps, the Coastal district, stretching from the borders of Victoria, where Australia's highest mountain, Kosciusco, looks down from amid his glaciers upon the great grazing plain



of the Manaro; to where the Tweed river falls into the ocean under the ranges of the Queensland frontier. The scenery of the region is enchanting. The country is densely wooded, even to the mountain crests, which average about the height of those of Wicklow. Every now and then the sea runs into the land in lagoons and estuaries, whose banks are clad with trees, and into which numberless rivers flow. The only openings in the forest are the farms of the selectors. Now and again one meets a large property, a station of from ten to forty thousand acres in extent given over to pasturage on which the trees have been destroyed by the hideous process termed "ringing"—*i.e.*, cutting through the bark all round; but in the coast district large stations are not the rule. They are to be found further inland. To the south the farming is much as we have it at home. Cheese, butter, cereals, cattle, sheep, and horses are the chief produce. Creameries are extensively in vogue. As you go north and draw nearer the tropics the farming gradually changes. Maize—of which two crops a year—sugar-cane, bananas, pine-apples, grapes and oranges—of which you can buy a hundred for three-pence in the season—are grown. Near the Queensland border I have seen strawberries and pine-apples in the open air, side by side in the same bed.

The glory of those Australian forests is indescribable. The trees are vastly high. I have travelled along for days together through sylvan giants averaging over five score feet in altitude. The undergrowth is all but smothered in creepers and wild vines, which wind round the smaller trees in graceful green festoons

decked with many tinted blossoms ; while the ground is carpeted with flowerets of all sorts and shades. Their name is legion. The brilliancy of their colouring is not to be conveyed ; but hardly any have any smell. Nothing I can think of can give an adequate idea of the bush in New South Wales, save, perhaps, GUSTAVE DORE'S marvellous illustrations of TENNYSON. Is it not strange, though, that in these new countries, with all their wondrous vegetation and their virgin soil, you never get the sweet, health-giving scent of grass and flowers, of broom and gorse and heather you get at home? 'Tis strange, too, that their birds do not sing, nor their rivers run, with those infinite variations of fairy rhythm and music that we so love in ours. There are but two musical birds in Australia—the magpie ! and the bell-bird. I must reject the jackass. Their magpie is the very antithesis of ours. He is white where ours is black. He is musical. Ours is hardly ! It is the habit of the Australian magpie to gather with his consorts in the leafy dome of some high tree, where swaying with the wind, and measuring its cadence, they warble out a delightfully-modulated chorus, like a concert of reed pipes. The bell-bird is a little creature, only to be found in the depths of the silent woods. His tinkling note is the exact reproduction of the stroke of a silver bell. You are riding slowly on perhaps through the semi-twilight of the over-arching green arcades ; your reins hang loose upon your horse's neck ; you are abstractedly plunged in thought, musing maybe of home. Softly, in the stillness, a sweet sound falls upon your ear. A bell-bird somewhere strikes his silvery "ting," another answers "ting," and another

answers him, until, in the reverential gloom of these grand primeval glades, you fancy yourself assisting in wrapped devotion at some solemn, religious ceremony in the sombre aisles of some old Gothic cathedral.

There are few roads through this Australian bush. Those that exist are mostly timber-cutters' tracks. It is a not uncommon experience for travellers to get "bushed"—*i.e.*, lost in the woods—and to have to spend the night "*à la belle étoile*" in consequence. But the climate is so mild the experience is rather a pleasant one than otherwise if one can secure a dry bed among the leaves. On one occasion I nearly had to find a damp one. We had a journey to make of some seventy-five miles for one of the last meetings I held in New South Wales, at Murwillumbah on the Tweed. We started from Lismore one bright sunny afternoon a party of three. One of my companions had never been the road before. The other had been once some years previously. But we felt young and scorned the consideration of such trifles, for we were well mounted. I was specially so, for my charger was wont to carry a noted equestrian and a bishop. We shook hands with our leave-taking friends all round, and off we went. There had been exceptionally heavy rains throughout the district. We knew we should meet some swollen creeks. We were told, too, that there was a big flood on the Brunswick some thirty miles ahead, where we were to stay the night, but the news did not trouble us. We rode along gaily, smoking and chatting, revelling in the thousand glories of the dense, sub-tropical bush, which extended for unnumbered miles on either side of our

track. We passed the clearings of a hardy selector or two—mere specks upon the woodland ocean. We forded two or three turbid creeks with much splashing and more laughing, until at eventide we descended into the Brunswick valley.

Here we began to suspect there was something in this rumour of a flood. As we advanced the trail grew more and more moist. Next came pools of water, small to begin with, but gradually lengthening out as the road fell lower and lower. Soon these pools began to join each other, until by-and-by there was more pool than road visible along our way. Matters now wore a less cheerful aspect. My friend, who had done the journey once before, and to whom we looked for light and leading, said he knew we were right so far. But what he didn't know for certain was how far off might be the Brunswick. He thought it might be eight miles off, or ten, or twelve, but wasn't sure. Our chatting subsided. There was less laughing and joking. We began to wish a trifle anxiously we were already there. To make bad worse the sun began to dip behind the trees, and the light to fail. We looked at our watches, and found to our dismay how late it was. We had dawdled along the road. We had stayed to admire the scenery, to pick flowers and soforth. Old Time had fairly stolen a march upon us. There was nought to do but to hasten on. Hastening on, however, began to be harder and harder. The brown muddy rises disappeared by degrees. Nothing remained but water. Our horses sank into it deeper and deeper at every stride. First it covered their fetlocks, next their knees, then it rose

above their knees and washed our toes, so that we had to hang them over the knee-pads of our bush saddles. Presently our jaded horses began to flounder about unpleasantly, so much so that we grew resigned to wet our boots to keep our saddles, and we did wet them, and more of our understandings still before that ride was over. And now down came the night, as it does in these regions all at once; and there we were, wading along through the flooded forest, and in the dark! The moon rose late that night, so we could not call to her for help; and the few stars which peered down at us through the narrow rift, the track made in the tops of the gigantic trees did us no service. There was nothing but water—water all round.

Camping was impossible. The Lord only knew into what holes we might fall if by mischance we left the roadway, such as it was. We fancied we had left it more than once, but, the saints be praised! we did not. On we struggled through the gloom in single file. So densely dark was it I could hardly distinguish the white puggaree round the hat of the man before me but half a horse's length away. There was no sound but the monotonous melancholy splashing of our tired steeds, broken only now and then by a grumble from one or other of us not wholly unlike a curse. Presently the fire-flies came out, and hovered round in clouds, mocking us with their momentary phosphorescent sparkle. It was a strange, weird scene and awesome—one indeed we could have enjoyed under happier circumstances—the black forbidding water stretching on all sides in canals and lakelets, whose term and boundary lost themselves in the

imagination and in the night, shining here and there as the fire-fly's twinkle was reflected in it, and showing the tall, columnar, ebon stems of the great gum trees rising shadowy from it like the countless pilasters of some antique heathen fane, midnight witnesses to unearthly rites, and guarded by witches' unhallowed spells.

How we kept the trail our good luck alone can answer. Fortunately we did keep it, and at last, towards ten p.m., a joyful "cooe" from our leader scared the water-spirits of that dismal swamp. "A light ahead!" "Glory, alleluiah!" we shout; "but isn't it the flies?" "No!" "Nor a star?" "The —— a star! It's the Accommodation House!" "Hurrah! Hurrah!"

This ends our journeying in the "Land of the Golden Fleece." Our next will take us through the "Land of the Moa and the Maori." It only now remains for us to bid "adieu" to one of the most genial and generous of peoples, and to one of the most favoured and glorious of countries upon which the sun of heaven shines. We can't say all, nor even much of what we should wish to say. You know why, Mr. Editor. We may only say, and sorrowfully. "Good-by, Australia!" And we also say, and from the bottom of our grateful hearts, GOD bless you!"

## CHAPTER X.

## NEW ZEALAND—AN EPISODE OR TWO.

OF all our journeying that, perhaps, to which we look back with the pleasantest recollections was our journeying in New Zealand. Whether it be owing to the influence of climate, of scenery, or of the friends we met and made, I cannot say ; but we look back to the home of the warlike Maori with a sentiment into which gratitude and kindness enters much, both on our own personal account and on account of the profitable prosecution of the purpose that took us there. Some episodes of our travels in New Zealand are worth recording. I was once doing a long drive in the South Island, through a wild, wooded, mountainous region, where primæval woodland spread for miles—unnumbered miles—around, and jagged mountain peaks soared thousands of feet into the sky. We started at daybreak. I was the only passenger on the coach. My driver was a pleasant, chatty fellow, and his company helped to lighten the tedium of the way. Several of the usual coaching accidents or incidents also came to our assistance.

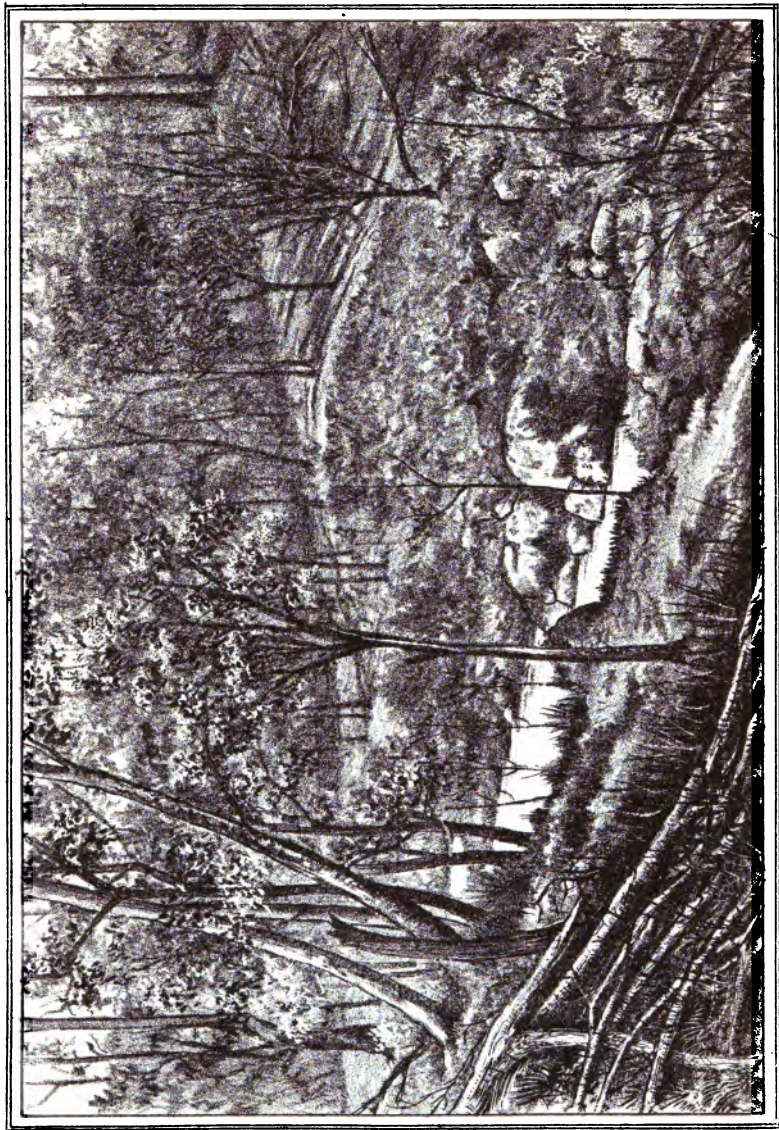
At one place, when crossing a stony ford, we broke one of the springs of our ramshackle conveyance, and had to fix it up as best we could with bits of cord. At another point we had to pass a bush fire. The forest all about was smoking and smouldering. On reaching

a certain narrow turn we found, in addition to the blinding smoke, a fresh impediment in the shape of two charred and blackened trees, which had fallen across the road. We had both to take off our coats and set to work to move them away. This we did, after an hour's hard labour, by means of levers hastily improvised from saplings cut by the wayside, so as to allow the coach to pass. Towards nightfall we made the "accommodation house," a three-roomed wooden structure, standing solitary in a grand wild mountain gorge by the bank of a rushing silvery stream. The horses unyoked, we adjourned inside to discuss the invariable meal of strong tea and tough mutton. We were stiff and sore, but as hungry as hawks, and did ample justice to the fare provided. That point satisfactorily settled, I ensconced myself in a chair by the huge open hearth, in which a roaring bonfire of logs spluttered and leaped and crackled. I was soon deep in the "Jail Journal," under the benign influence of a pipe. How we do enjoy a pipe after a hard day! Presently I heard a noise behind me of heavy stamping. I paid no attention to it at first, thinking it might be the coachboy sorting his mails; though inwardly I marvelled at his ponderous clogs. However, the stamping continued, and I kept on never minding. I was too tired, too lazy, and too comfortable to be curious. But the stamping still continued and came nearer by degrees. Finally I lost patience, and turned in my seat to suggest to my companion to leave his blessed mail-bags in peace for the night, when, lo! what did I see?—a great red cow, with an inquisitive face, and horns as they have them in Texas



or in the Campagna, blinking at me across the table! Visions of the wild cattle of New Zealand flashed before me. Stories of furious mad bulls rushed into my reeling brain. I sprang from my chair in terror. My consternation must have been contagious, for while I rushed to hide myself beside a pile of firewood in the farthest corner, my visitor also disappeared through the window, which, in her haste to leave me, she forgot to open.

Another time I was going by rail from one meeting to another—one of a series of meetings in the course of one of those series of series of meetings to which one looks forward with trembling, physical and mental; and to which, when ended, one looks back as to a nightmare. You people in Ireland who stay at home in ease, if you only knew how hard we work for you abroad; if you only knew how hard the work is, and how hard we have to work to do it! Well! you'd put up statues to us anyhow at each cross-road. But you know nothing of it at all. No one who has not undergone the awful ordeal of an oratorical campaign in foreign lands knows what it means—has even a conception of its meaning. Travelling day after day in all sorts of weathers, anyhow and every-how. Talking night after night to all sorts of audiences, and under all sorts of strange conditions. Too tired to sleep; with nerves on edge, a brain reduced to a condition of stirabout, and a throat so strained by incessant use that it is the very cruellest of cruel tortures to answer even "Good morning!" How one hates the dreadful music of a brass band. How one loathes the agony of public receptions, of



BUSH SCENE IN NEW SOUTH WALES.



addresses upon railway platforms and from hotel windows, and all the rest of the many things prompted by our friends' exuberant kindness of heart, wholly innocent as they are of the excruciating pain it means to those whom they delight to honour. Well, my train was slowly drawing into the little wayside station. The platform was packed with a joyous crowd. The brass band was going it with a will. I lay in my seat limp, played out, barely alive. There was a rush to the different carriages. All wanted to discover the "envoy"—to look at him, to wring his hand, to hear him speak. There was a tall, venerable man—a fellow-traveller—standing by the door looking out upon the scene, wondering, perchance, what was the occasion of the gathering. Two or three enthusiasts hailed him:—"Hello! Are you the Irish member of Parliament?" He grasped the situation on the moment. "No," said he, "thank GOD, I'm not!" and inwardly I wished that I were he.

Another time my fellow-worker, John Dillon, played a prank upon the West Coast, which was nearly at my expense, and which will prevent at least one New Zealander ever forgetting either of us. He had gone on before and was reaping in a golden harvest night after night from the West Coast miners, assuredly the most devoted, enthusiastic, and open-handed Irishmen upon the face of the earth. At one place—which shall be nameless—he had held a splendid meeting. The miners had gathered in from the bush, the gorge, the mountain, for leagues upon leagues all around, bringing their gold dust, and their gold nuggets, and their still more precious sympathy for the

cause of the old land. They asked him, when leaving, about his brother "envoy." "Was he coming?" "Could they see him?" "And when?" "They were out on a holiday." "A week or a month made no difference to them." "They'd wait to see the 'other man,' if he were passing that way." JOHN DILLON, with absolute guilelessness, told them the "other man" was coming. When he wasn't certain; but this he knew, that the "other man" was coming down *incog.*, and that, if they meant to catch him, they'd have to be wideawake. Away went DILLON. The miners stayed behind. Every inch of the incoming road was patrolled. Not a buggy drove in for the next two or three days that was not stopped and searched. At last a buggy hove in sight. It was recognised as that of the M.P. for the district. He himself was in it; and there was another man with him. At once the alarm was given. The word flew around—"The other man has come."

The boys turned out in their hundreds. In a twinkling the horses were unyoked: the chaise was seized by brawny arms and drawn along in triumph to the hotel. At last they had the "other man." "No mistake this time!" "They'd caught him!" "Hooray for Home Rule!" "Hooray for the Plan of Campaign!" The occupants of the buggy couldn't quite make it all out. The M.P. thought the welcome was for himself, and heightened the illusion of the *welcomers* by taking off his hat and waving it in response to their cheers. Then it began to dawn upon his companion—who wasn't me at all—that he went for something in it. He soon found out what it

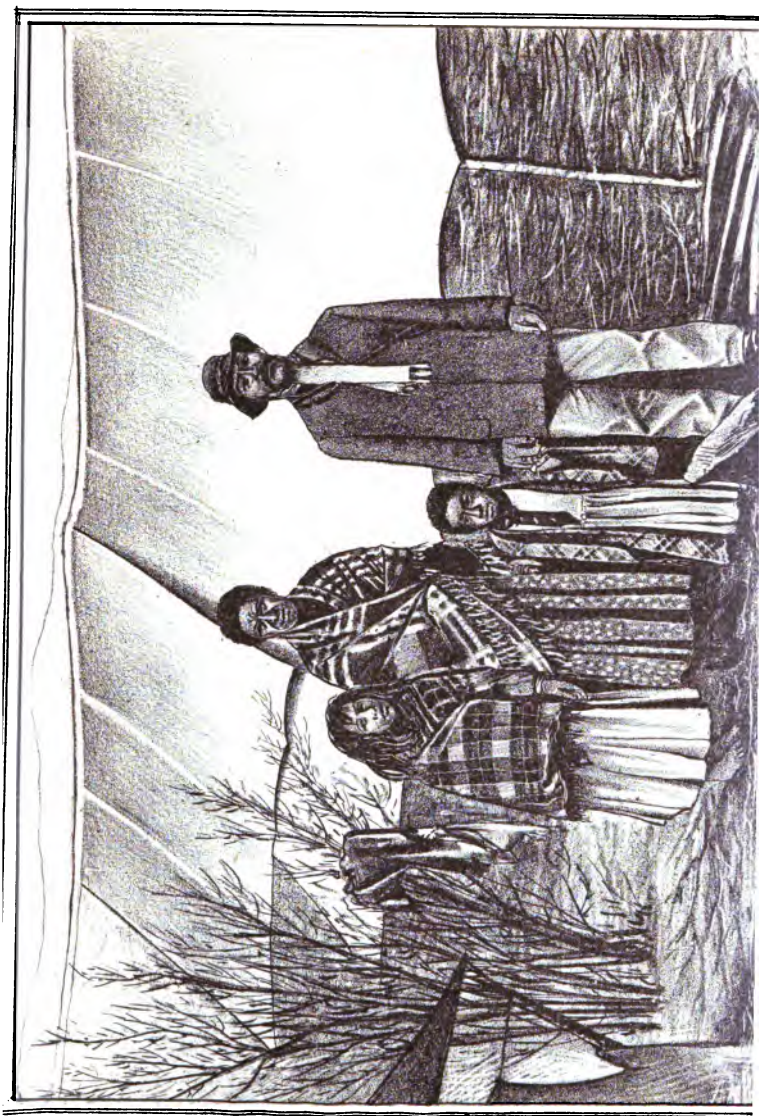
all meant. He was ESMONDE. "But he wasn't." "He vowed he wasn't." "He had nothing to do with him." "He wasn't even a Home Ruler." Not a bit of use! The buggy was dragged up to the hotel, and he was bundled upstairs to the window, where five hundred stentorian pairs of lungs greeted him with thunderous calls for a speech. He again protested he wasn't the "envoy." "He didn't even know the 'other man.'" "He had never seen him in his life." Not a bit of use! All his disclaimers were completely thrown away! "None of your larks, young fellow!" "You're ESMONDE." "DILLON says so." "You can't play it off on us!" "No fear." "You're travelling *incog.*, you villain!" "To the d——l with your *incog.* We're cuter than BALFOUR!" "We have you now!" "Speech, speech." "Ireland forever." "Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!" And the poor wretch had to make a speech. What he said was never recorded. Nobody ever knew, if he even knew it himself. It was drowned in cheers. That done, he was taken downstairs again and had to shake hands with every man and woman there. Such a hand-shaking! They had it in for him with his *incog.*, and took it out of him till his shoulders ached again. Then he had to drink all their healths until his remaining wits were clean "stole away," and when at last he was packed into his buggy and sent on his way amid wild "hurrahs," he was an interesting study for a thought-reader, and had been well baptized into Irish agitatorship.

When I came by a day or two later the miners had melted away like the snow. I met my counterpart

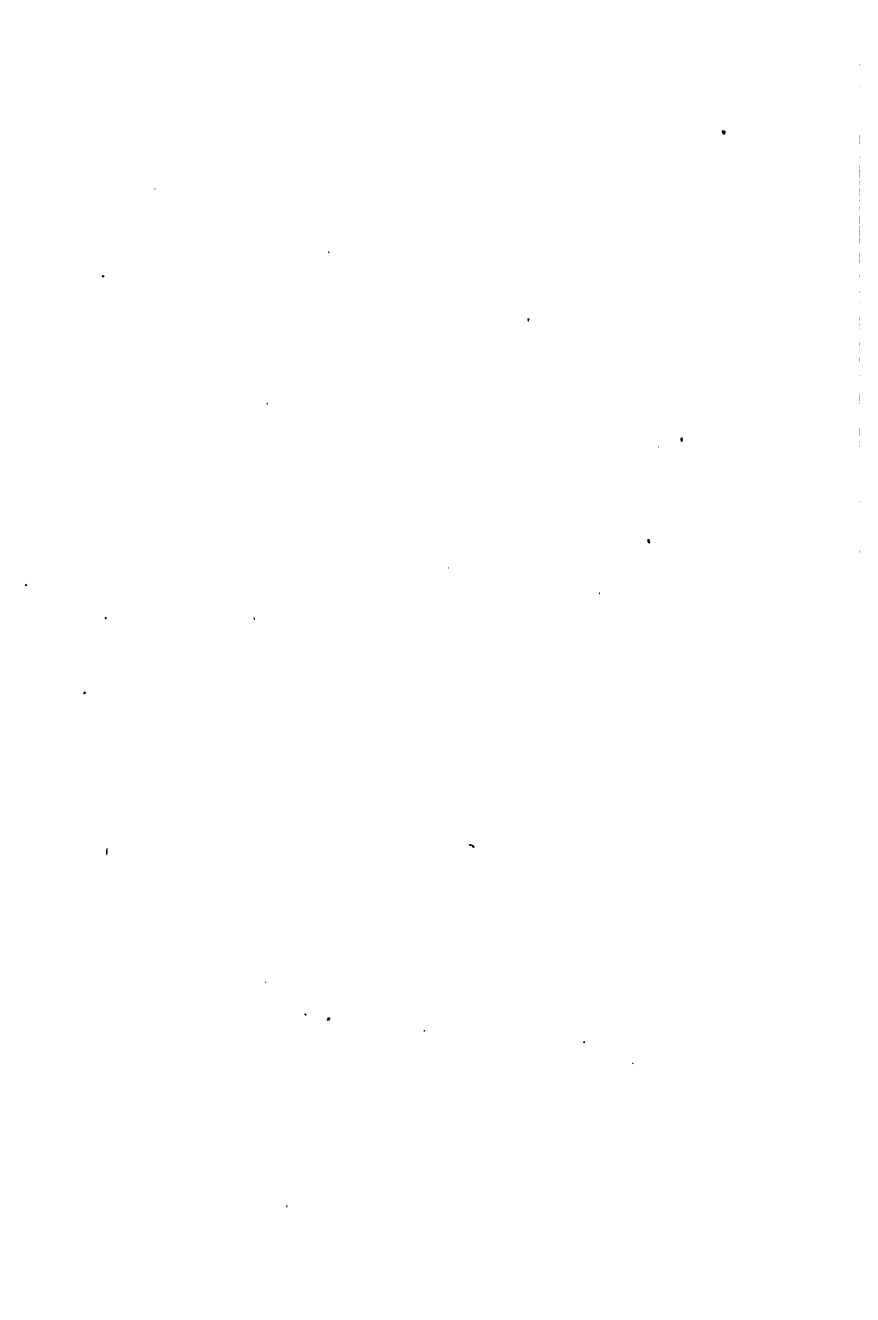
afterwards with his arm in a sling and all New Zealand held its sides over the joke for full nine days.

Another time JOHN DILLON and I were very near going to Heaven, or that other region, where some would think us better placed. We were coaching from Hokitika on the west coast—at the conclusion of our tour along it—to Christ-church on the east—where another campaign was about to begin. Our route lay through the famous Otira gorge. The Otira is one of the sights every visitor to New Zealand should see. The scenery all along the route is unspeakably grand. For half the day you ascend through valleys and mountain gorges, following the sinuous course of a river-bed. Mountains hem you in on all sides; their bases draped in forest green and brown, and their sharp-cut peaks glistening white with eternal snows. About half way you reach the summit of the pass; the remainder of the evening you descend through scenery equally savagely sublime. We were about the middle of the last steep rise at whose summit stands the frowning gateway of the pass. Upon our left a precipitous wall of rock rose to the sky line. To the right it fell perpendicularly down to where hundreds of feet below the torrent foamed and brawled and thundered. The track cut on the face of the cliff is just wide enough to allow one vehicle to pass. There is no protecting wall or fence along its verge. Our five horses were straining at their collars. The traces of the heavy coach were as taut as fiddle strings. Suddenly we came to where a land-slip had taken place. A gang of men were working to repair the road. They had formed a temporary bridge of









planks of merely sufficient width for the coach-wheels over the chasm. The appearance of the structure was of the ugliest. But there was no going back. On we lumbered. With dexterous hand our driver walked his horses on to the causeway. The coach rolled after them. When in the very centre there was a crash! Some of the planking had given way. There was a second's pause. The carriage swayed! Another second and we were over into the abyss. But the horses threw themselves forward! Stumbled! Stretched their harness to the last inch! Nobody spoke! Nobody breathed! There was a tugging! Another crash! A jolt! and thank heaven we were again upon solid ground. So close was it, that the lamps on our left-hand side flattened against the over-hanging rocky wall! But we were safe! and we breathed again.

New Zealand has oftentimes been called the Switzerland of the Southern Hemisphere. It well deserves the name. A more majestically beautiful, or more wildly picturesque country it is difficult to conceive. Almost every region I have ever visited was represented to me somewhere or other in Maoriland. Switzerland and Italy in its glaciers and its lakes: Mexico in its changeful colouring and its stately mountain spires: Ireland in its flashing rivers, its brown heathery manuka scrub, and its waving billows of emerald bracken; England in its tidy farms, with their neat fences and their perfect farming; New South Wales, Florida, or the tropic isles of the Pacific in its gorgeous wealth of evergreen. To describe New Zealand is beyond the compass of this chapter. I may be allowed, however, a few words

upon its hot lake district—one of this world's greatest wonders.

When our work was ended, and a joyous Christmas with the most thoughtful and considerate of friends near Wellington, had revived our sore-taxed energies—a Christmas in which ten days flew away, and all too quickly, between strawberry eating, tennis playing, trout-fishing, and picknicking about the hills, JOHN DILLON and I started for New Zealand's wonderland. After an enchanting two days' drive from Napier, we made our first halt upon the sounding shores of Lake Taupo—an inland sea of six hundred square miles, overhung on the far horizon by a white headed mountain barrier. There we found ourselves in a centre of volcanic activity. All about us were hot springs—mud and water geysers, fumaroles—natural steam escapes—and boiling pools. Many of these hot springs and lakelets were heated to a temperature far above boiling point by subterraneous fires. The water geysers flung up scalding jets thirty and forty feet into the air. The mud-holes bubbled and boiled, and seethed and snorted with horridly uncanny voices. The fumaroles puffed and puffed their vaporious clouds into the blue ether. The very ground we walked sounded cavernously-resonant to our ears, and every breeze that blew across the eerie waste carried stifling sulphur fumes upon its wings. Close to our hotel a deep clear river, with a tide of vivid green, flowed away to where, at the Huka Falls—of tragic notoriety in Maori annals—it forces its way at terrific speed through a fathomless channel cleft in the rock, and hurls itself in mad fury, and with the roar of ten

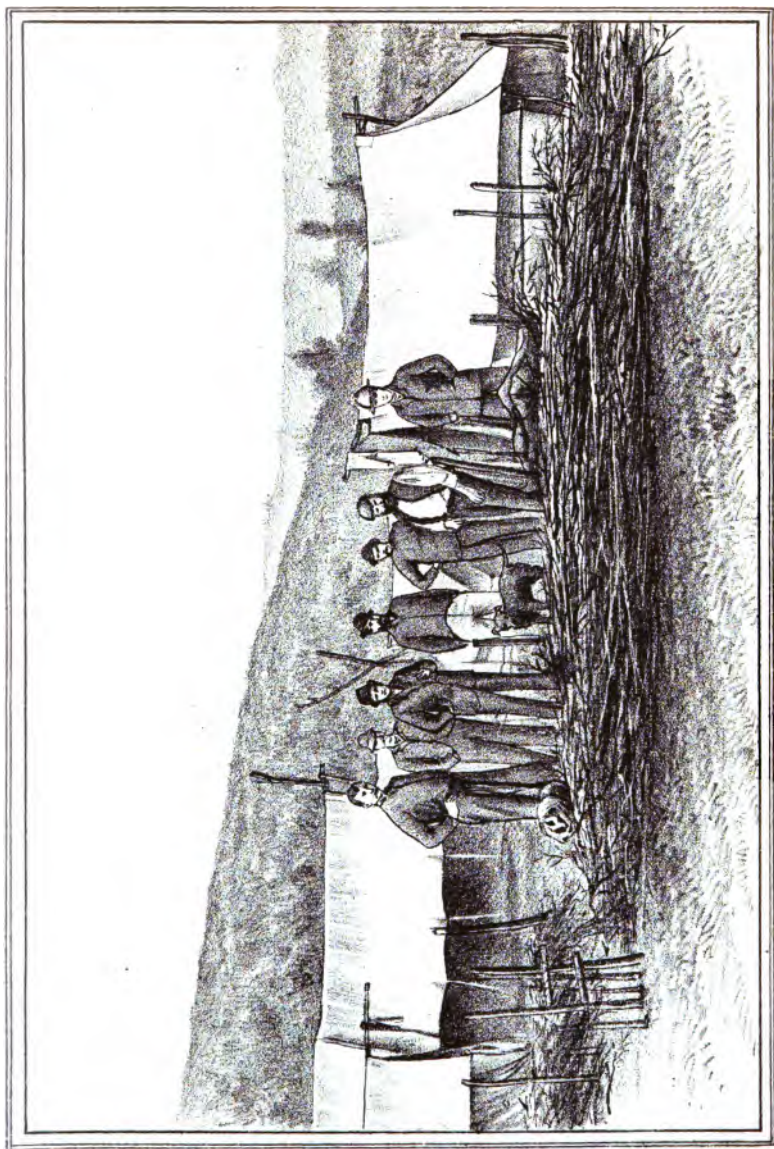
thousand lions, into the titanic cauldron underneath. There its foam-flecked waters are gathered into a whirlpool, and forced forward through a beetling black crevasse upon the plains beyond. We spent two or three days here, bathing in luxurious natural hot baths, and then drove on forty or fifty miles to Ohinemutu, by the classic waves of fair Lake Rotorua. We had there, and on a grander scale, a repetition of Taupo's marvels. Hard by is a Maori settlement, called Whaka-rewa-rewa—about the most curiously-situated hamlet in existence. It is actually built among an aggregation of active, never-sleeping geysers. Of these some are diabolically alive ; smoking and spitting and hissing and snorting day and night ; throwing up columns of water and sulphurous vapour unceasingly ; while their roaring silences every other sound.

About the native houses—"whares," as they are called—are burning pools and many coloured mud holes, into which occasionally Maori babies fall, and get boiled or baked, which occurrence nobody seems to mind, nor is anybody in the least surprised. Least of all does anybody seem ever conscious in the least degree of the weirdness and general instability of the situation. The Great Geyser at Whaka-rewa-rewa is an awesome thing. It is shaped like a huge cup, which looks like purest alabaster. The bottom of the vase is filled with dark green water, whose depth it is impossible to gauge. During the day time it remains relatively quiescent. Towards nightfall the cup begins to bubble. It bubbles and bubbles and bubbles ; growing angrier and more excited every

moment. By degrees the water rises to the brim, fretting and foaming. Suddenly it boils over, belching forth an enormous watery pyramid sixty or seventy feet in height, which continues to leap heavenwards for thirty or forty minutes shrouded in clouds of steam, shaking the earth, and with thunderous diapason positively terrifying in its sublime awfulness.

Shadowing Rotorua is the volcano of Tarawera spitting smoke from many craters. This mountain is three thousand feet high. Five years ago it was not. The vast surface covered by its ponderous base was the Jerusalem of New Zealand pilgrims. It was there that the beauteous pink and white terraces, so beautifully described in FROUDE'S "Oceana," spread out their unequalled and unapproachable loveliness. So lovely were they that they compelled the worship of even the least impressible to Nature's fairy handiwork. Alas! they are no more. In one single night the terraces disappeared. On June 10th, 1886, there was a frightful earthquake, so frightful it may not be pictured. Ruin and ruthless desolation were spread around for leagues and leagues. The face of the country was completely changed. The terraces disappeared, and in their places rose up this terrific monument to the might of seismic powers, this dread reminder of that nether world on which we creatures while we trifle with it, and argue about it, and lay down our puny, perky dogmatisings about it have neither knowledge nor power, nor, indeed courage sufficient even to think.

As for the New Zealanders, we found them most hospitable of the hospitable ; kindest of the kindly and



CAMPING OUT, NEW ZEALAND.



generous beyond thanking in the expression of their sympathy with Ireland. In no other part of the globe have I seen so proportionately magnificent a generosity towards her cause as I have among the miners of the West Coast. Taking New Zealand all round, we succeeded there even more signally than we did in Australia. With some three exceptions the New Zealand Press was warmly on our side. Our receptions at the cities such as Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch chief and Dunedin, were such as we never ventured to anticipate. We had every reason to be more than pleased by the attitude towards us of New Zealand's public men. The leaders amongst them came upon our platforms, wrote in our favour, spoke for us, and subscribed to our funds. First and foremost among them was their noblest Roman, New Zealand's grand old man, Sir George Grey. A veteran grown old in the Imperial service, and distinguished whether as a governor of Imperial dependencies, as a statesman, a diplomat, a soldier, or a man of letters amongst the foremost men of his time and of his race.

These are facts which even unionists may not gainsay—and they are not prone to stick at trifles. These are facts important and encouraging above all, as showing how Ireland's struggles for the right of self-government enjoyed by all the great British colonies has enlisted the sympathies and the approbation of all that is liberal-minded, far seeing, and patriotic among the Colonists.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS.

OUR work is done, or all but done. We have but one more meeting to attend at the other side of the Pacific, at San Francisco, and then: Ho! for Holy Ireland. We are all but on our way home. Going home at last, after a year and a-half of working and of wandering. And the thought revives us, refreshes us. 'Tis like a breath of our flower-scented Irish air.

Some little time must elapse before the American mail-boat reaches Auckland. So, while JOHN DILLON stays in New Zealand to wait for her and rest himself—and sorely he needs rest—I seize the opportunity of the departure of a trading steamer—captained by one of the most jovial sailors I have ever met—and make a dash for the South Sea Islands.

The South Sea Islands! We have often read of them, and of South Sea Bubbles, and of Captain Cook, and D'Entrescasteaux; of Bougainville, and of La Perouse; of beachcombers and of buccaneers; of pearls and palms; of corals, cyclones, cannibals, and of all the other daring and venturesome men and strange, scarce credible things and scenes which have woven round those far-off islets a many-tinted halo of semi-mythical romance.

I visited the groups named on the maps the "Friendly" and the "Navigator" Islands, and by their

dusky denizens Tonga and Samoa. How much prettier are not the native names than ours! I touched at the Islands of Tongatabu, Hapaai, Vavau, and Keppel among the former; at Savii, Upolu, and Tutuila among the latter. At Tongatabu is the residence of King George of Tonga. A fine old gentleman, six feet high, as straight as a rush, and some ninety years old. He received me most graciously; knew all about Parnell; but was not quite clear as to whether the member for Cork or Queen Victoria was the greater personage in England—Billetania, as he called the place. He presented me with a Kava root—a very high compliment, indeed, according to South Sea etiquette—and we had a long chat together through the medium of his court interpreter. I also made the acquaintance of King George's Prime Minister—the Rev. W. S. Baker, a very remarkable man, who treated me with much courtesy, and gave me much valuable information anent the South Pacific.

At Hapaai—among the crowd of natives assembled on the coral beach to greet us on our landing—were two white men. Of those, one was a western Irishman, from the county Mayo, all the way, who gave me £5 for the Irish evicted tenants. Blessings on his generous heart. At Vavau I met another Irishman from the county Dublin, one of the half dozen white citizens of the chief town there, who does a roaring trade in glassy beads and gaudy calicoes among its dark-skinned population. Other Irishmen I also met, scattered through other islands. At Apia—Samoa's capital—for instance, the editor of the paper there is

an Irishman, and from Dublin. Like many another Irish editor, he has many a time been suppressed, and has had to run the gauntlet of State prosecution by the authorities, or the usurpers of authority, German, by the way, this time, not British, for the crime of being "agin the Government."

My visit to Vavau left a lasting impression on my mind. It is one of the most beauteous spots on the broad bosom of the Pacific. We arrived in the evening and steamed slowly to our anchorage off the village of Neiafu in the gloaming. It was a romantic arrival. All round us varied forms of rock and island, covered with tropical vegetation, cast dark shadows on the deep, still waters. Not a cloud dimmed the glory of the starry heavens; not a ripple stirred the waters underneath; while a religious silence brooded over the whole, and made us feel like intruders in some mystic and sacred place. The illusion was heightened as the twinkling lights of Neiafu began to appear, and we heard the chanting sounds of native voices sending us their melodious welcome upon the balmy air. We soon found ourselves abreast of a pier, where our reverie was brought to an abrupt ending by the babbling jargon of the quidnuncs of Vavau's capital as they hailed the advent of the mail boat with the news of the outside world.

Next morning we awoke in fairy-land. An archipelago of volcanic rocks and cliffs, rising precipitately from a sea intensely clear and unfathomably deep. These islets, everyone crowned with a crown of brilliant green, which contrasted with their white rock walls and the blue of the ocean at their feet and the

bluer sky overhead, with an effect too beautiful to be rendered. These heaps of verdure again open up on all sides and in all directions into an endless series of channels and bays and nooks, each lovelier than the other, among which the eye wanders enraptured, to lose itself finally in a labyrinth of loveliness.

That afternoon I went in a canoe to explore one of the many wondrous caves in which the islands abound. My boatman was a native, cheery and goodnatured, with a voice soft and musical as a woman's, and the "torso" of a HERCULES. He paddled me some four miles to the Ana-peka-peka, a cavern upon whose beauties a poet could expatiate everlastingly. We floated on the swell of the tide through a noble archway into a vast grotto, groined like a cathedral roof, tinted with every shade of the loveliest and most delicate of greens and blues and russets and yellows. The walls of this noble chamber looked as if frescoed by the loving hand of some old Italian master. The floor on which we floated varied in hue from golden green, where the sunlight struck it through the entrance, to sapphire blue further in, deepening to richest purple and to darkest black away in the gloom beyond. We could see the bottom thirty or forty feet beneath us, every pebble and every coral spray upon it showing as clearly as if under a magic microscope. The paddle in my comrade's hand gleamed silver azure in the water, and the myriad gorgeous things that clustered round the buttresses of the walls glowed with more colours than I can name. Capri's Blue Grotto cannot hope to stand comparison with Ana-peka-peka; and there is an echo in that lofty dome awakened usually only

by the moaning of the Southern Sea, compared to which that in Pisa's Baptistery is but the wailing of an envious sigh.

What are these South Sea Islands like? A general description will serve generally for all. They are of volcanic manufacture, and the industry of the coral worm completes what seismic forging has begun. Vulcan and his cyclops are terribly busy away in the South Pacific. There are perpetual risings and sinkings of the ocean bed. Hardly a year passes without some change therein through volcanic agency. Off Nukualofa—the capital of Tongatabu—Mr. Baker showed me an island of considerable extent which a few years back he himself saw thrown up in an afternoon. To picture a coral island you must imagine first an outer circle of coral reef. This reef skirts the shore at distances ranging from a few yards to nearly a mile. Its crest is visible at low tide. At high tide the water rushes over it with a tremendous roar, breaking all along it into a grand foaming line of majestic breakers. Outside the reef, and up to its very edge, the sea is immensely deep, so deep sometimes that ships cannot anchor, their cables are too short. There are occasional breaks in the reef through which ships may pass in safety sometimes, and sometimes only boats. Inside the reef the water is oft-times very deep also, but in most cases it shallows gradually to the snow-white strand. There you come upon your coral island. There are various scientific names for the different species of coral isles, with which I shall not trouble my readers. Some are as flat as pancakes, and visible only when you come upon

them. Others are hilly, mountainous even, with peaks thousands of feet in height. They are usually covered along the coast line and upon their low-lying ground with graceful cocoa-nut palms, whose feathery branches quaver incessantly with every passing breeze. On the uplands and in the interior the country is clad in dense jungle, so dense that it is barely possible to force a passage through it, of banana, breadfruit, and pawpaw trees, and a hundred other sorts of trees besides, bound together and covered over with many species of creeping and climbing vines.

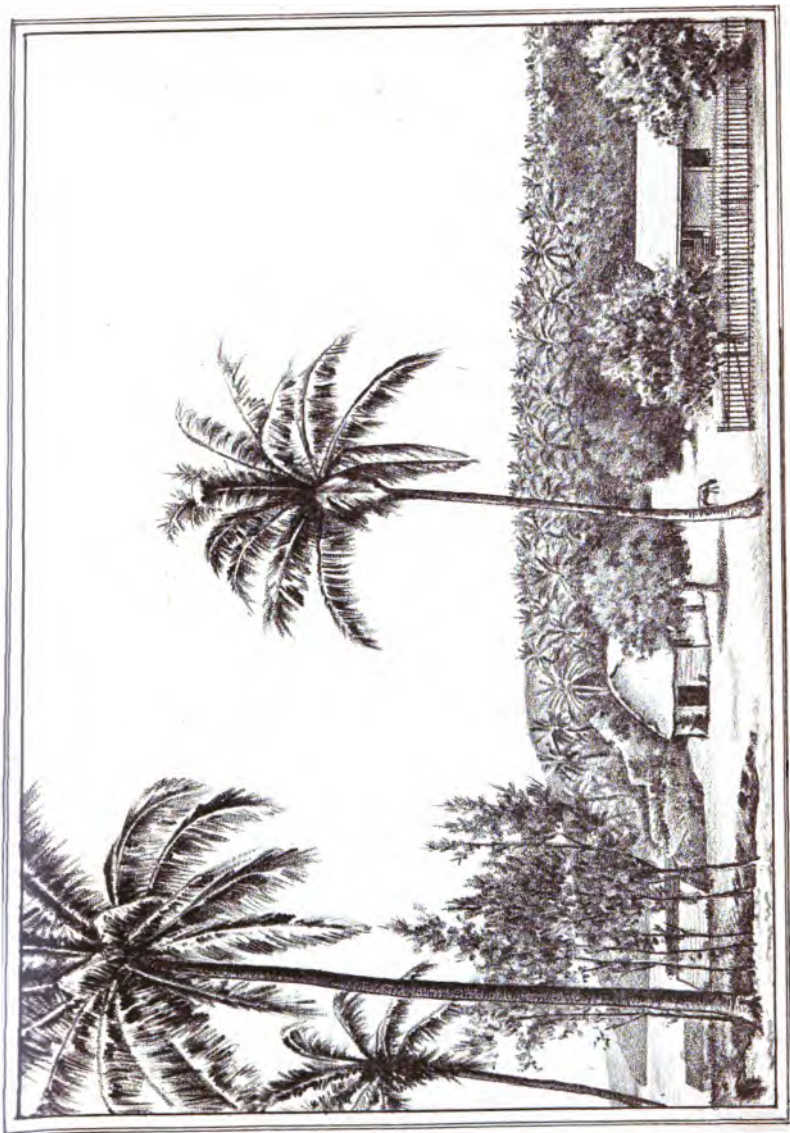
Now and then you come to a small clearing, studded with fruit-bearing trees, and carpeted with luxuriantly green grass, about which are scattered the houses of the natives and their gardens of yams, taros, kumaras, and other farinaceous roots. In the centre of these villages is an open space called the "Mali," where the folk assemble whenever—which is fairly often—there is occasion to discuss matters of public importance. The King, or head chief, presides; and each subordinate chief addresses the congregated audience in turn, through his "talking man." A good "talking man" is an influential personage. Every chieftain has one as an indispensable adjunct to his household. The debates of these South Sea Parliaments are conducted in accordance with strictest rule and certainly with far more decorum than even the deliberations of Britain's Imperial Legislature.

The native houses are most picturesque, clean, and comfortable. They are usually shaped like the back of a tortoise. They are built upon a wooden framework, most ingeniously designed, fastened together

with rope made from cocoa-nut fibre. Not a single nail, or iron of any sort, enters into their construction. This framework is thatched with cocoa palm leaves, most neatly interlaced; and the walls, which rise some six or seven feet to the eaves, are covered with plaited palm-branches, so designed that they can be drawn up in panels like Venetian blinds to admit the breeze from whatever quarter it may blow. Inside, the walls are bare, if it be an ordinary house. If the house of a chief, they are artistically draped in folds of "Tappa" or "gnatu"—native cloth—manufactured by beating from the steeped bark of the Chinese mulberry tree, and painted in very effective, if rude, designs in black and white and yellow and brown. The interiors of the houses are spotlessly clean.

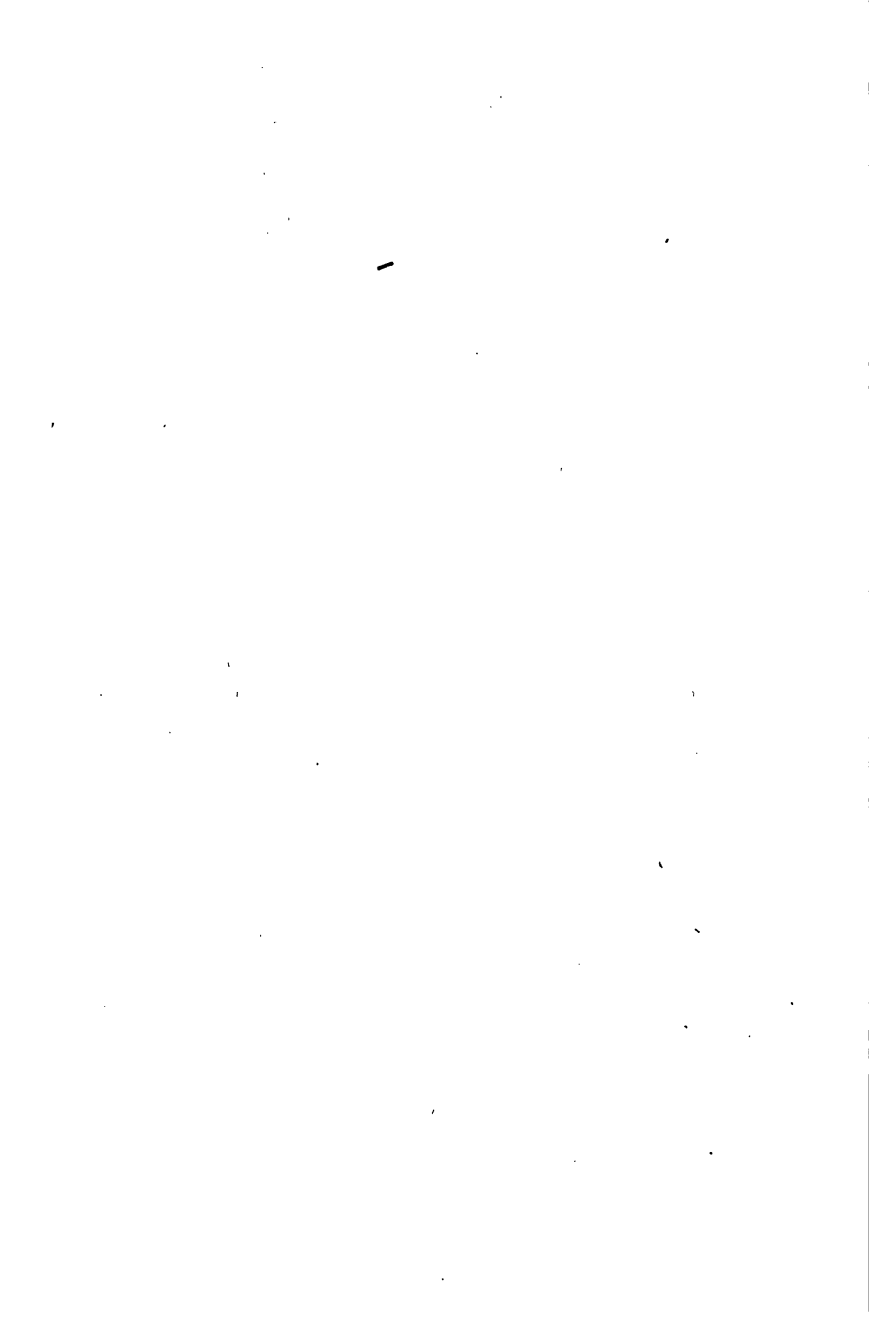
When a stranger enters he is at once greeted with cries of "Talofa," "Alofa," "Aloha"—*i.e.*, "Good-day;" literally, "My love to you." A roll of matting is spread for him upon the small, black pebbles, of which the floor is made, and he is invited to seat himself. Young cocoa-nuts, full of a delicious, cool, clear liquid, are brought to him to drink; and luscious bananas for him to eat. Such bananas! We never see the like elsewhere. Cigarettes of native-grown tobacco, rolled in bits of banana-leaf, are handed round.

If the master of the house desires to do his visitor special honour "Kava" is ordered to be prepared. Kava is the national drink. It is made from the dried roots of a shrub, which is carefully cultivated. These roots are cut into small pieces and grated—in the good old days they were masticated—into a large wooden bowl, standing on many legs, and sometimes richly



NATIVE VILLAGE, FRIENDLY ISLANDS.





carved. When enough has been grated water is added; and when the compound has been strained and cleaned by an elaborate and graceful process of every particle of woody fibre, it is Kava as it is drunk. When the beverage has been thus concocted the maker announces the fact; whereupon all the company clap their hands. An attendant then stands up with a cup of polished cocoa-nut in his hands, and says solemnly to the host, "The Kava cup is full. To whom shall it be brought?" The latter then names each guest singly, and in the order of his eminence; and to each in turn the cup is carried, emptied, and filled again until each has had his share. The ceremony is most interesting from first to last. Unfortunately, like many another of the ancient native customs, it is gradually being shorn of the details of its celebration under the influence of our so-called "civilisation." As to the Kava itself, it looks like muddy water, and tastes like soap-suds. They say, however, that it is very good, and that the liking for it is easily acquired by practice. I found it abominable. It is intoxicating, and has a curious effect when taken to excess—a fitting one, perhaps, for an antipodean drink—in that the tippler loses his feet instead of his head, and while he keeps his senses is bereft of his understanding.

Another charming South Sea custom is the "Siva" or native dance. I was present at several of them. The best was one organised for my entertainment at Apia, by a Samoan chief—a judge, and one of King Malietoa's Cabinet—called by the musical name of Leapai Tuletefuga. These sivas

used to be given upon grand occasions, such as marriages in high life or returns from victorious wars. On the occasion in question we were seated on mats in the place of honour at one end of Leapai's house. Kava had been duly drunk, and we lighted our cigarettes. Then the dance began. The dancers were divided into parties. Each party was ushered in in order at the opposite end of the edifice, and went through their several figures, while all the native community of Apia gathered round. The actors were arrayed in native gala dresses of vari-coloured woven leaves. Round their heads they wore crowns of flowers, and round their necks strings of scarlet berries, which were set off by their dark skins glistening with cocoa-nut oil. The orchestra was placed behind, and beat time upon the ground with sticks. Various chants, marvellously harmonised, were sung. The dancers waved their hands and arms to the singing with graceful motions; sitting at first, then standing; slowly to begin with, then more and more rapidly; finally going through all sorts of figures, with the most extraordinary agility, and still more extraordinary facial and bodily contortions; the whole to the most perfect time, and each figure to a different song. The dancing roused the enthusiasm of the audience to the highest pitch, which after each act found vociferous expression in a tornado of "Maliés," Samoan for "Bravo."

On the Island of Tutuila I was treated to a full-dress native feast, the presiding genius at which was a kind and generous French priest—a missionary, who has devoted his life to the people among whom he

lives, and to the efficacy of whose efforts for their advancement his congregation at Leone is a standing testimony. At this feast I tasted of every South Sea delicacy, and was initiated into all the mysteries of South Sea cooking. We ate bananas, taros, yams, breadfruits, and goodness only knows what else besides, served up on banana leaves, and cooked in a dozen ways, the whole washed down by copious draughts of cocoa-nut milk, cool and fresh from the trees around. Our "*pièce de résistance*" was baked pig. My readers might wish to know how we baked him. Well! We first made fire by rubbing together two sticks; we applied the fire to a pile of dry branches; those we covered with stones, washed in sea water, and the stones again with banana leaves; the whole we left to smoulder. Meanwhile a hole was dug hard-by in the soft sand, carefully swept clean, and lined with leaves. When the stones were red-hot they were taken from the fire with wooden tongs. Some were placed on the bottom of our oven. The pig was then laid upon them. The remainder of the stones were piled on top of him; the heap was covered down with banana leaves, and piggy was left to take care of himself. In about an hour he was exhumed, done to a turn, laid upon a bed of leaves, carved up with surprising dexterity, and handed round.

The Tongans and Samoans are delightful people. They are of the same stock as the New Zealand Maories. Their hair is straight and as long as ours. It is naturally black, but by bleaching with coral lime it turns to a ruddy golden hue, which contrasts with their coppery skins with pleasing effect. They are

tall in stature and splendidly built. They are brave, chivalrous, cheerful, thoughtless as children. They are most expert swimmers and sailors; there is no drowning them. One of their favourite pastimes is diving through the furious surf which surrounds their rock-bound coasts, or riding over it on planks. They fish much, and are clever fishermen. They think nothing of paddling over the ocean from island to island in their rickety little outrigger canoes made from a single log hollowed out and pointed at each end. Under their natural conditions they are the happiest and most fortunate of peoples. They have no care for the morrow. Nature does everything for them. Heaven will always provide them with cocoa-nuts without any trouble on their part. Fruits in abundance grow wild. Their main industry is the making of tappa and their main occupation the cultivation of the taro—a species of yam. They are law-abiding under their own laws. They are peaceable nowadays. The Tongans used to be cannibals, but they are such no longer. All they require is to be let alone. But in comes the white man with his “civilisation” and the million plagues and vices which follow him; with his books and his brandy, his dollars and his rifles; he robs the aborigines, and teaches them to rob; demoralises them, destroys them; and, doubtless, before many generations have passed away the places of these interesting, kindly islanders will know them no more.

Take, for instance, the case of Samoa. There you have a group of fertile and lovely islands inhabited by a friendly, peaceful people. A German firm gain a footing there; cheat two or three chiefs out of

portions of their land—of which by native law they cannot dispose—plant cocoa-nut trees, form plantations, to which they import hundreds of natives from other islands to work as slaves. They then give the Samoans to understand that their own country is theirs no longer, but belongs to the German Kaiser. The Samoans don't see this. They are then called "Rebels," as we have seen other races similarly circumstanced likewise styled. Soldiers are landed to shoot them down; but the Samoans with their clubs and spears hunt the soldiers back into their ships. Then there is a great outcry. "Massacre of Europeans by South Sea Savages." "Horrible atrocities," and so forth. And the vile farce we have seen acted so often that we are sick to death of it is played again. "These white martyrs must be avenged!" "Their blood cries to Heaven for vengeance." "The honour of the flag must be upheld." "Law and order must be maintained." An iron-clad squadron crammed with military, armed to the teeth, is dispatched. Native villages are shelled and blown to atoms. Native women and children are massacred. All in the sacred names of law and order. The element of dividends on cocoa-nut plantations having, of course, nothing to do with it. The murder is done in the cause of civilisation and of humanity. These Samoans are blood-thirsty "rebels." The miscreants won't submit to be plundered and exterminated even by philanthropic Germany.

And so the game goes on. When, fortunately for Samoa, another white power steps in. America objects to this spreading of German civilisa-

tion. England, under a Tory Government, has acquiesced in the atrocity. But America will not, and America stays Germany's hand. A conference of white powers is called. For what purpose? To decide, forsooth, which of them, or how many of them, are to have first claim to the exploitation of the Samoans. The conference confers; talks platitudes; draws up a "Constitution" if you please, framed on the latest European patent, for these South Sea Islanders; and tells them they may have this grand machine as an earnest of the white man's anxiety to civilise them. This grand machine is, of course, to be worked by white officials, whose salaries, equally, of course, these South Sea Islanders are to pay. A constitution for Samoa! What a glorious proof of the white man's generosity and magnanimity and philanthropy. What a boon! What a blessing to a nation of wayward islanders, who, to be sure, never asked for one, never wanted one, but only wanted, and only want still, to be left alone! And who, uncivilised as they are, are clever enough to perceive that this grand constitution is only an engine for fleecing them more easily and more strictly in accordance with humanitarian principles. And this is how those things are done! 'Tis philanthropy! 'Tis civilisation! 'Tis Christianity! But is it not monstrous that great, civilised, and so-called Christian empires, with thousands and thousands of square miles of territory at home, should be so possessed of the demon of universal plunder that they cannot allow even a handful of harmless creatures at the other end of the earth to live in the land the

Almighty has given them, in peace and in their own way?

I was picked up off the Friendly Islands by the American mail steamer, with JOHN DILLON on board, after a cruise of three or four days in a sixty-ton schooner, during which we rode out a hurricane.

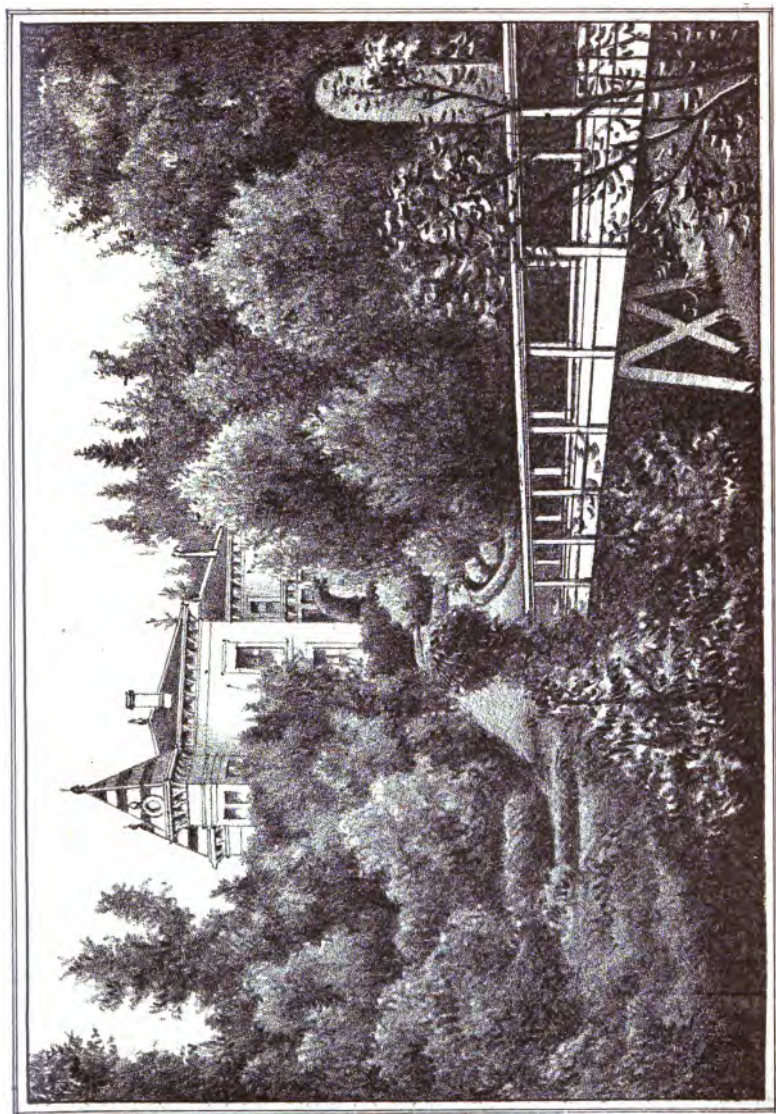
Our next stay was at Honolulu, the capital of the Hawaiian Kingdom, where we remained a week, and where the Irish colony welcomed us and fêted us as none but Irishmen know how to do. This group of islands—on the map the “Sandwich”—has been named the Paradise of the Pacific. It possesses the most wonderful volcano in the world—Kilanea. It was the scene of Capt. COOK’s death. The city of Honolulu is built by the sea shore, at the end of a V-shaped valley, formed ages ago by an earthquake rending a chain of hills in twain. This valley slopes gradually upwards until it ends abruptly in a cleft of the mountains. This spot is known as the “Pali.” It possesses an historic interest as the scene of the last great battle which decided the future of Hawai, and placed the present dynasty upon the throne, by the total destruction of the opposing faction. The “Pali” has a character and a scenic beauty quite its own. Shortly before you reach the summit of what is in reality a mountain pass, the track seems to lose itself in air between the gigantic portals of two forbidding mountain peaks. When you attain the crest you find yourself upon the brink of a precipitous abyss, which falls perpendicularly at right angles to the road, some eight hundred feet into the valley at its base. On either side a mountain wall runs in a semicircle right



round to the sea, which fronts you ten or fifteen miles away, enclosing a fair garden tract, covered with plantations of sugar-cane and rice—or, as they call it, “paddy.” All the land is emerald green, even to the mountain tops. The sky is blue; so likewise is the ocean upon the horizon, while the track onward from the base of the precipice winds a red ribbon over the volcanic soil. The “Pali” is the only opening in the mountain chain that cuts the island asunder. Beneath it, to this very day, are to be found hundreds of skulls and bleaching human bones, the relics of the broken and flying hosts, which KAMEHAMEHA, the great Hawaiian conqueror, drove in headlong rout to awful destruction over the abyss.

The city of Honolulu is an urban Eden. The houses are hidden in a carefully-ordered confusion of tropical trees and shrubs, and overgrown with flaming mantles of creepers and flowering parasites. It is a prosperous place, with a cosmopolitan population, among which are many Chinese and Japanese, but among which the aboriginal Hawaiians will soon be no longer found. It owns a king, but virtually breathes the American spirit, and will shortly form as much a portion of the United States as Chicago or Charleston.

JOHN DILLON and I were presented to his Royal Highness King KALAKAUA, an intelligent and courtly man, with a luxurious modern residence in which he lives in state. He is a constitutional Sovereign, with two houses of Parliament and a responsible Ministry to help him in governing his interesting kingdom.



GLENDALOUGH, BERKLEY, SAN FRANCISCO.



## CHAPTER XII.

## SAN FRANCISCO, MEXICO—A BULL FIGHT.

WE have held our meeting in San Francisco. A tremendous meeting — overflowing, enthusiastic, charged with that fierce, fiery, powerful magnetism of responsive sympathy so specially characteristic of Irish meetings in the United States, and at which 8,000 dollars were subscribed for the cause. Nothing more remains to be done, and we set our faces for home.

But just one word, before we go, about San Francisco, the beautiful Queen city of the "Golden Gates." The metropolis of the Pacific slope is of the same age as the capital of Victoria, and of the same size. But San Francisco proudly boasts of one of the most magnificent situations in the whole wide world. She is the great emporium of the trade of North America with Asia and Australia. That trade is gigantic to-day. What it will be as years roll on no prophet dare prophesy.

The city is built all over the picturesque cliffs which close the entrance of her mammoth roadstead in which the combined fleets of every nation flying a flag could anchor with miles of room to spare. With such a situation small wonder that San Francisco is a thing of beauty. She aggregates the beauties of Sydney, and Lisbon, and Naples, and Killiney, in

portions as she fronts the water from different points of view. Behind her and stretching away to the billows of the Pacific lies a broad expanse of parkland, made with untiring energy and lavish taste upon the shifting sands which cycles of whirlwind have built up along the verge of the restless sea.

Countless are the attractions of San Francisco for the traveller. I must leave their description to more able hands. She has buildings simply marvellous in the richness and beauty of their structure; vast streets thronged with busy traffic; docks adequate to the refitting of a navy; warehouses to store the wealth of an empire; a Chinese quarter where you may see thousands of those strange celestials living their curious Asiatic lives upon American soil; sport of every kind, quail-shooting, for instance, in her near neighbourhood, to which commend me, and all the more warmly if it is to be enjoyed in such company as I enjoyed it; but above and beyond all the attractions of San Francisco is the unfailing, invariable, princely hospitality of her citizens. Hospitality such as theirs would make a Sahara a Paradise. To enjoy it by the Golden Gates—— Well, I have been there twice, and have never yet been able to stay there long enough.

And now, kind readers—kind and indulgent souls who have borne with me so long—this is the last boring I shall give you. Stay with me yet a little while, and we shall make our last expedition together. Its scene shall be laid in Mexico.

We pass through the garden of the West—rich, fertile California—under Mount Shasta's beetling

brows, past gay Los Angeles, and on over the Mojave desert, through Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, the happy hunting grounds of Apach, Comanch, and cowboy, with their countless points and circumstances of interest to arrest us, but we may not stay. On we fly until at daybreak one fine day at Laredo, in the latter state, we gaze with eager eyes over the Rio Bravo's tumultuous flood upon the glorious land of the Aztec.

Yes, that is Mexico. Mexico! What a world of romance and of heroism and of varied history does not that one word contain? Montezuma! Cortez! The younger civilisation conquering the old and wiping it away to crumble in its turn before it had done anything but undo: Huitzil and his fearful priesthood and his awful rites of human sacrifice: Guadalupe and its sacred shrine, the embodiment and symbol of what alone was good in the tragic changing of the old order which the Spaniard wrought: Silver mines whose wealth untold propped up for many a year the tottering fortunes of Spain's pre-eminence, but also supplied the lure to guilt and greed and wrong and hideous evil, for all of which—an' there be an avenging Providence—Spain's utter downfall made retribution: Revolutions, wars, massacres, plagues, Indian war-braves waving their gory spears, "vaqueros" flying along the "pampas" whirling their "lazos," half hid in whirling dust, or lazily puffing their unending cigarettes, shrouded in gaily-tinted "ponchos:" "Peons" moulding the sun-baked "adobe" or working with uncouth instruments in the waving maize fields. Temples to unknown gods, temples to our GOD,

gorgeously grand : The old stones of an old and all but forgotten age built into the walls of our nineteenth century railway stations. All these things and more—ay, a million more—flit athwart the mirror of our mind and hover there and intermingle, as we look upon the land of Mexico and form a mental picture, strange myriad-hued, fascinating, equalled in the reality, but by the reality of Mexico's own inimitable, matchless scenery.

I cross the Rio Bravo, upon a bridge built by an Irishman, in the genial company of another Irishman who acts the generous host. We are bound for a "ranch" owned by his brother, one of Mexico's wealthiest land-owners, hundreds of miles away among the "Sierras."

We travel for a day over the prairie covered with the "mesquite" bush, whose soft tender green refreshes the sight. Next afternoon we leave the railway and strike across the plain in a light waggon drawn by six wiry mules. All that afternoon we rumble along the dusty track, now winding through a rocky waste of boulders, now bumping over the flinty bed of a dried-up mountain torrent, until, as the shades of evening begin to fall, we draw into the shadow of a huge mountain wall, which bars our further progress, and trends away as far as the eye can carry to right and left. This is our destination. It is the Mesa de Cartujanos. We reach the base of the cliffs. There the road ends. We are met by a picturesque band of swarthy Mexican cowboys, whose black eyes glance brightly from under their wide-brimmed grey hats, and whose lithe forms are wrapped

in home-made "zarapes" and "ponchos"—blanket-like shawls—dyed all the colours of the rainbow. They have with them a troop of shaggy ponies, equipped with high-peaked Mexican saddles, gaily ornamented in coloured leather and bits of brass and silver. They unpack our waggon, pile its contents on some of the ponies, and hold our stirrups while we mount on others. "What next?" we ask. "Follow the leader," says mine host, and away we go.

Such a ride! Our leader, Pedro by name, an old soldier and a personage, leads the cavalcade. We follow in single file. He makes straight for the cliffs. There is no road now—it is merely a track, formed by a water-course. He rides straight on. Soon we reach the bottom of a winding stairway cut in the face of the perpendicular wall of rock. Pedro puffs at his cigarette, and tickles his pony's ribs with his enormous spurs. The pony goes on gaily; onwards and upwards, like a cat he climbs the rocky staircase. Our ponies follow, and without a swerve or stumble, for a full hour we mount and mount. There is an occasional halt when the road allows of it to breathe our horses but there is no turning back. Up and up we go, now along chasms that make our hair stand on end when we look downwards; now on the verge of a crevasse; now through a natural gateway that barely admits the passage of our active little steeds; and again round overhanging masses of granite, where the track seems to be even beyond the capacity of the most venturesome of goats. But our ponies never tire, never stumble, never swerve—we quake occasionally—and at last we reach the end of our climbing, and find our-



selves in a new world. We have reached the summit of the cliffs, full five hundred feet above the plains below, and now another plain, apparently equally vast, extends away before us to the far horizon. A brisk canter of two or three miles in the dusky coolness, and there are lights ahead. There is a babel of barking of dogs and neighing of horses, and shouting and greeting of men and women. We have arrived at the "hacienda."

A wonderful place is the Mesa de Cartujanos. There are several of them in this Aztec land, where everything is wondrous to us ; everything is so novel, so strange, so totally unlike anything we have ever seen anywhere else. These "Mesas" are vast tablelands that rise hundreds of feet above the surrounding country, and are themselves little countries in themselves, with mountains, lakes, rivers of their own. Many of them are very extensive. The one of which I write is some twenty-eight miles long, with an area of over ninety-thousand acres.

This is how we spent our time on the Mesa de Cartujanos. What a joyous, heedless time it was ! I found it all too short. We rose with the sun. Drank our coffee or chocolate—made as it is only made, by Mexicans, and upon a Mexican "ranche"—and away we galloped on our gamey ponies. Sometimes it was to explore some cave, the ancient haunt of some aboriginal Indian tribe, who had left mementoes of their habitation in rude drawings upon its walls of hunts and feasts and forays and all the other notable events of their wild lives. And here occasionally Pedro would discourse to us of his strange experience

of Indian warfare, of burnings, raids, and cattle-raising; in all of which, to do him justice, he figured heroically by his own account, and concerning all of which we voted him a hero—there were no Indians present to gainsay him—so a hero he unquestionably remained.

At other times we tried our skill at rifle-shooting ostensibly at the expense of the hares—Jack-rabbits, as they are termed—but, the truth to tell, in reality at our host's expense, inasmuch as he supplied the cartridges. At other times we took part—as audience. be it understood—in the everyday work of the ranch; rounding up cattle; lassoing them, too, betimes. This lassoing of wild cattle is a most exciting game: one that requires nerve, pluck, dexterity, and, not least, horsemanship. A herd of cattle would show themselves a mile or two away. Pedro would give his commands to his subalterns, and at once our troupe would set itself to carry out his instructions. A certain beast was marked out to be the victim of our manoeuvres, generally an ill-conditioned bull, or an ancient cow of uncertain temper. Our object would be to separate this victim from the rest. Pedro would direct our march so as to bring us as near as possible to the wary kine before they got wind of our intentions. As soon as we were discovered their sentinels would give the alarm. Immediately they were in full flight, and we in hot pursuit as hard as our ponies could lay their legs to the ground. Over rocks and stones, and brambles and bushes a furious and madly-exciting race would ensue. After a while the victim would be separated from its companions. Having the pace of

it we would gradually draw up to it. Pedro's voice would ring out in stentorian command, and one or two of the company, as the case might be, specially selected, because specially competent for the important commission, would forge ahead, uncoiling their lassoes—ropes of twisted goat's hair, with a running noose at the end—as they galloped along. And now the most interesting act of the drama would begin. They would come up to the doomed animal at racing speed, winding their lariats round and round their heads to acquire the necessary momentum. Just at the proper distance, and at the proper moment, the lasso would fly out, like a whirling snake. It would fall as if drawn by some subtle attraction over the head or round the leg of the flying steer. For a second or two the pursued and the pursuer would gallop along together, while the latter was winding the end of the lariat round the saddle peak, then he would gradually edge away; the speed of the hunter and the hunted would slacken. The noose would tighten and grow taut, the cowboy's pony would stick out his sturdy legs, there would be a tug, a tussle, and the victim was laid prostrate. All was over.

After a day of this kind we would slowly wind our way homeward, smoking, chatting, poking fun at Pedro, laughing at his yarns, to the "hacienda" where a meal in genuine Mexican style and in genuine Mexican profusion would blunt the edge of our ravenous appetites.

Again we are on the wing. By Monterey, with its sulphur springs and stately overhanging snow-capped mountain guard, and its old fortalice, which knows

more of war and of wars' rumours, and varying fortunes, than many another fortalice with many more pretensions to celebrity. By Saltillo, Zacatecas, Lagos, Aguas-Calientes, and many another musically-designated centre of romance, and of historic association, we pass along, until at last we reach the world-famed capital of Montezuma, "Last of the Kings," cradled grandly amid the eternal mountains which bend over it, as if keeping reverent watch and ward over the fair city which spreads its streets and squares and palaces and churches over the plains. Of Mexico city I shall not write—I invite my readers to read of it elsewhere—it is too grand a subject to be trifled with. A volume would be required to contain an epitome of the treasures—artistic, historic, scenic, political, ecclesiastical—it enshrines. Else I would tell my readers of its 300,000 citizens and their ways of life; its museums; its pictures; its shrines: of the Alameda, of Chapultepec, of Guadalupe, and of the unprecedented greeting given by the Mexican legislatures to the representative of Ireland's struggling nationality; when as an Irish Nationalist, and at their special request, I addressed both Houses of the Mexican Legislature. For we must bid Mexico good-by for the present. We have yet another point of call before our journey ends interesting to Irish readers.

From Mexico to Vera Cruz runs one of the most picturesque of railroads in existence. From the latter city a four days' sail over the Mexican Gulf brings us upon the Island of Cuba. As we approach Havanna, the black frowning fortress of the "Moro" first strikes the eye, standing, like an ancient war-dog,

as guardian ever the harbour-mouth. As we steam up we see inscribed upon a central tower, "O'DONNELL"—the name of a past Governor of the island. Passing through a narrow canal, each side of which bristles with cannon, we enter a magnificent basin, crowded thickly with the ships of every nation, and the city of Havana is before us.

Like all Spanish cities, Havana is full of attractions to the tourist ; full, too, of quaint scenes from quaint city life, which greet one at every turn of its narrow and gaily frescoed streets. Many of these streets have Irish names. Many an Irishman has ruled over Cuba as the representative and disposer of the might and the magnificence of haughty Spain. As everybody knows, Havana is the place where the smoker may look for his terrestrial Paradise. Cigars are made there annually in millions, and everybody smokes from morning to night. Between sugar and tobacco, Cuba is one of the richest in production of all the islands that sparkle on these tropic seas. The Cubans are not happy all the same. Their beautiful country is one of the last remnants of the vast Colonial Empire of the Spaniard. Upon its stricken head all the evils and all the miseries of Spanish tyranny seemed to have heaped themselves. The country is taxed to death. Import duty and export duty is levied on everything. The Cubans are weighed down by enormous impost imposed upon them, to pay the extravagant salaries of Spanish-born officials, who are sent to Cuba to prey upon it ; and who literally sweep the island clean of everything they can touch with their vulture claws. No native-born Cuban is ever appointed to any Cuban

office. In no part of the world, barring Ireland, have I ever seen so many police. They actually swarm. Police, detectives, spies, informers—all the vile brood, in fine, which flourish so with us—flourish there. As with us, the police in Cuba are the governors of the country. The history of the gallant, but, so far, unsuccessful struggles which the Cubans have made for liberty is well worthy of the sympathetic study of an Irishman. I cannot deal with it here, but to those of my readers who may wish for information, I would commend the reading of Mr. James O'Kelly's fascinating book named "Mambi Land."

In spite of all their misfortunes, the Cubans contrive to amuse themselves. How do they amuse themselves in Havana? Well, they listen to bands, they go to theatres, they go to bull-fights. There are numbers of squares and public gardens throughout the city, in which very good bands discourse sweet music every afternoon and every night; and to such performances the citizens go in crowds as regularly and methodically as they rise in the mornings. The same remark applies to the theatres, where you will see good acting to a very critical audience. Those Latin races are always much more critical than we are, and more difficult to please in things theatrical.

As for the bull-fights—those specially Spanish spectacles—we must have a word about them. You are seated in a vast amphitheatre, round which thousands of excited and vociferous spectators are seated in tiers. There is a band at one end, and, at the opposite, in a gaily decorated box, sits the President, generally a magistrate or high official, who

orders the conduct of the show. Suddenly there is a braying of trumpets, and from a side entrance at the bottom of the arena the bull-fighters enter in state. First come the "Toreadores," gaily dressed in brilliant uniforms, covered with gold lace, with their scarlet cloaks flung jauntily over their shoulders. Next come the "Picadores," equally gorgeously attired, armed with lances, and riding broken down horses, whose eyes are bandaged, so that they cannot see, and whose attenuated bodies are covered with a leathern imitation of mediæval armour. Then come the "Matadores," the famous swordsmen, who give the bull the *coup de grace*. They walk up in procession to the front of the judge's box, bow to him solemnly, and then he gives the signal to begin.

There is a tremendous blare of trumpets ; another door is thrown open, and in, with a roar, rushes the chief player, the Bull. He is generally a picture : small—according to our notions—wiry, in perfect fighting condition, without an ounce of superfluous fat, with a glossy skin, a beautifully-symmetrical shape, two tremendous horns, sharp as sabres at the points.

In he rushes with a wild bellow, and right into the centre of the arena he gallops before he realises the novelty of his position. Then he stops ; looks round bewildered at the thousands of eager human faces that enclose him on all sides ; and whose frantic applause makes his ears tingle. He shakes his head, paws the ground, and roars again in amazed defiance. He is not left long to ponder upon the situation. Something scarlet flashes in his eyes. He lowers his head. It is

the red cloak of a "Toreador." At once he makes a rush for it. Strikes wildly but catches nothing; the red rag is gone, and his tormentor likewise. But another cloak flies before him, there is another rush, and with no better result. Then there are more red wavings and more rushings, and from all quarters and in all directions, and the sand flies and the dust whirls, and amid all the din of the applauding audience, the shouts of the bullfighters, the clanging of the band, rises the base deep bellowing of the bull.

The President gives another signal. The scene changes. The "Picadores" advance. The bull delighted at last to find something tangible on which to vent the pent-up fury that possesses him, throws himself headlong upon the nearest. He is received upon the point of a lance. There is a bellowing, a pushing, a wild striking with horns. Sometimes the horse goes down, and then, Heaven help his rider. But usually a "Toreador" distracts the attention of the bull, and away he plunges after his new tormentor.

Next come those whose business it is to stick gaily bedizened darts in the bull's back. This they do with marvellous dexterity and agility and coolness, and are wildly applauded.

And now comes the closing scene of the drama. There are tremendous cries for the "Matador." He enters with becoming solemnity, bows all round, walks up to the judge's box, and asks for leave to kill the bull. This is accorded, and then with a bow he takes his sword from the arm of an attendant. The sword is very long, and sharp as a needle's tip. By this

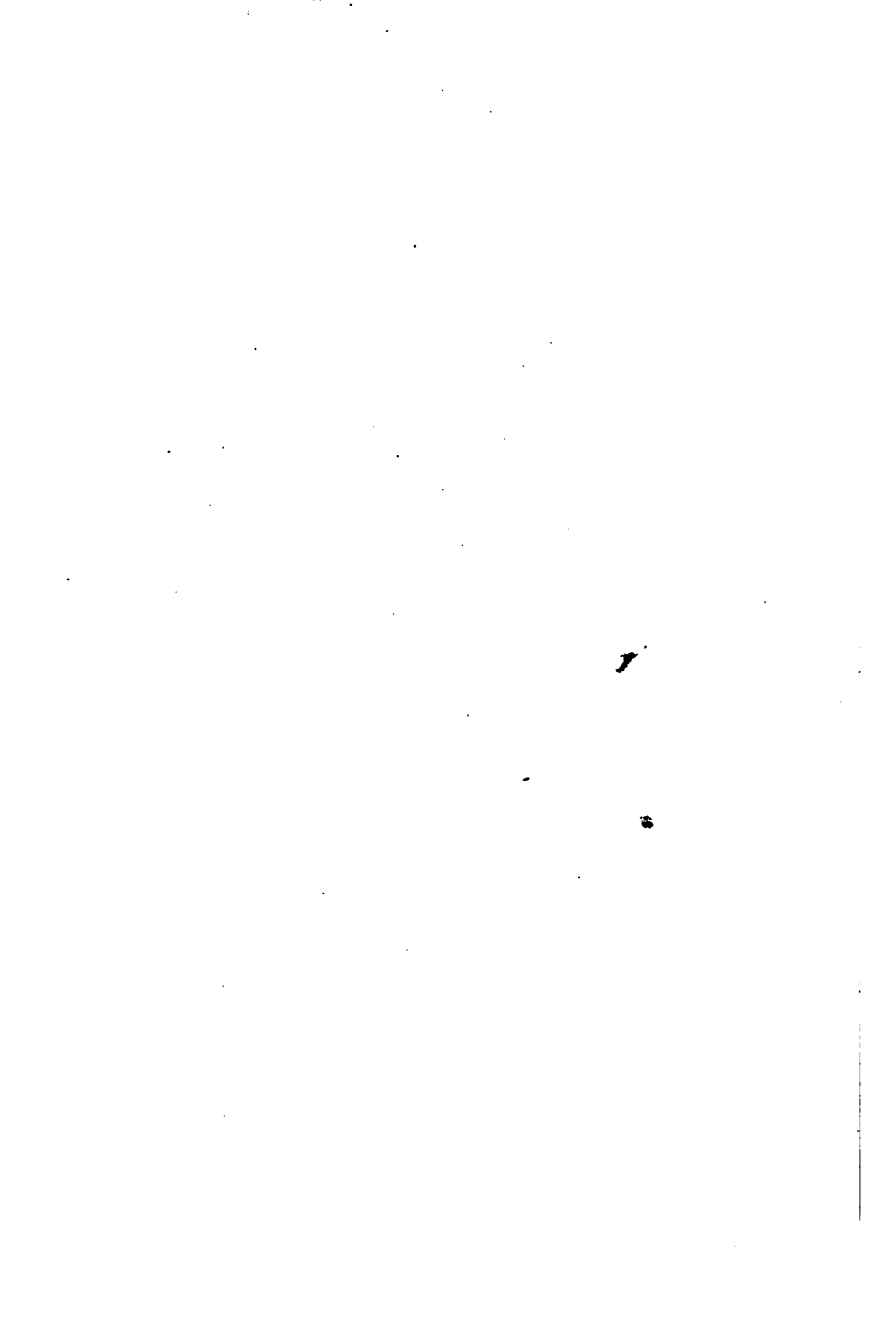


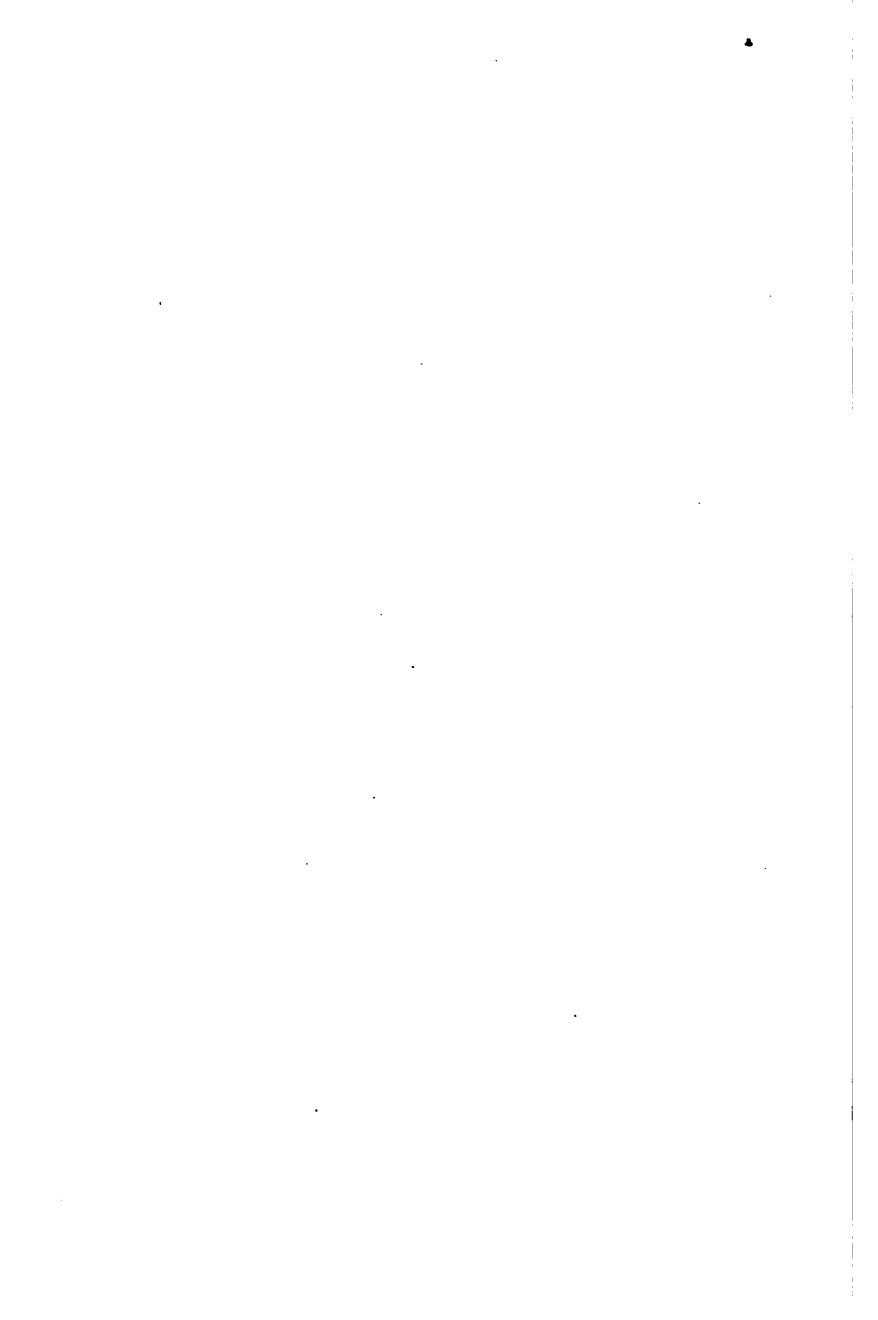
time the bull is more or less exhausted. He stands in the centre of the arena, panting, covered with blood and dust, but there is plenty of fight in him still. He marks a new antagonist, down goes his head, and there is another rush. The "Matador" is not ready for him, so he nimbly leaps aside. The bull flies round among the "Toreadores," who are all waving their cloaks, scatters them and returns to his new foe. This time the man is the aggressor. The bull has hardly recovered his wind from the last charge, when the "Matador" is upon him. Advancing swiftly, straight up to the infuriated beast, he stretches out his arm. The bull stares at him as if fascinated, then lowers his head for a charge. At that moment there is a flash. The swordbearer has thrown his body forward and stepped lightly aside. His sword is no longer in his hand. You may see its red hilt between the bull's gory shoulders. It has pierced him through and through. There is a stagger of the poor beast, a last brave roar of defiance, and down he sinks upon the sand. "El Toro" is no more.

I write no more. Next morning we set sail for the Old World. Three weeks later and we tread the green soil, and breathe the perfumed air of dear old Ireland. My task is done. I have led you round the globe. If you are pleased I'm pleased. So, gentle reader, fare ye well.

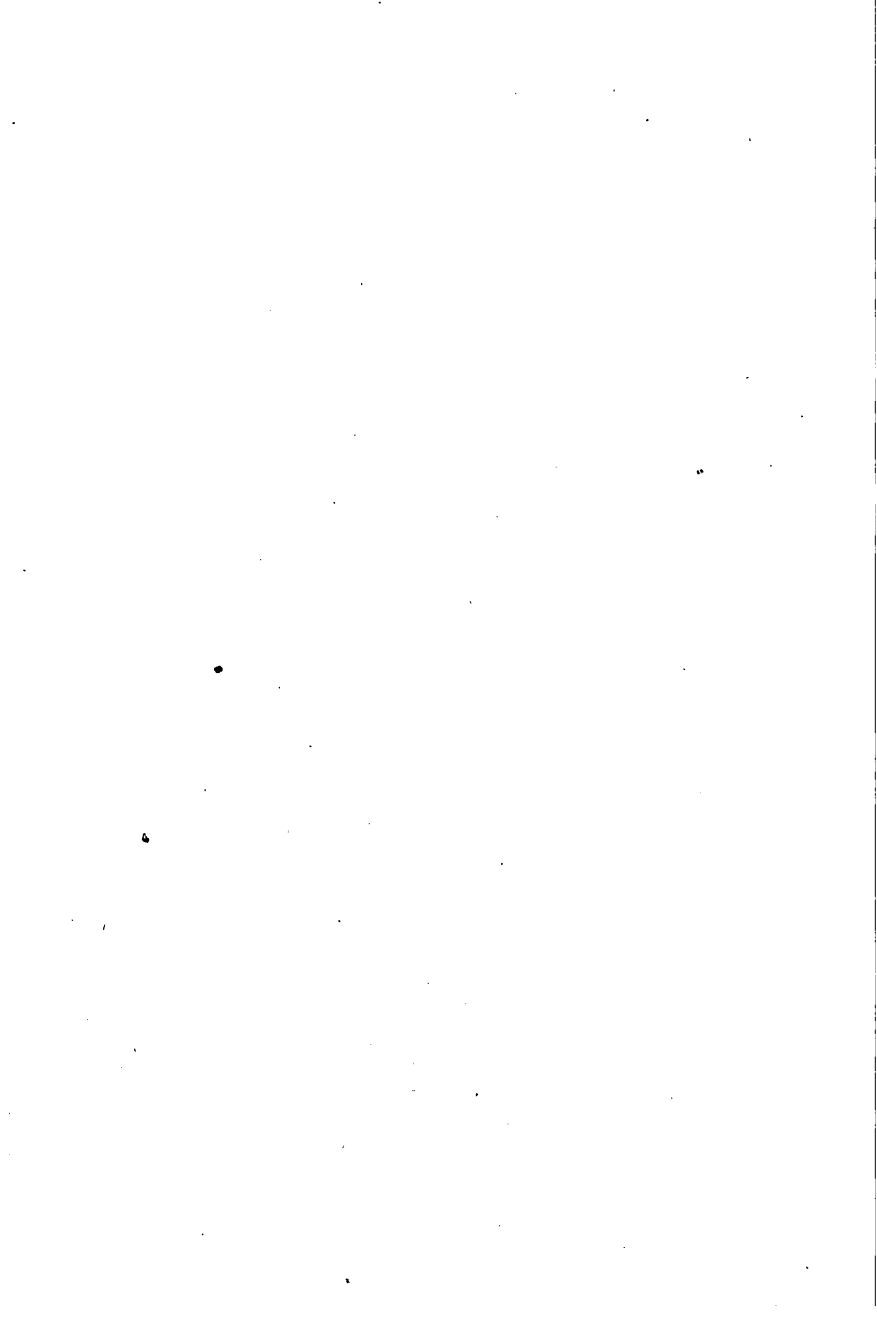








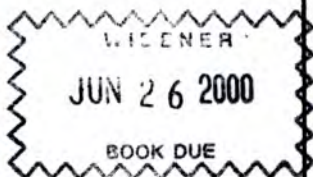




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